Polyhedron®

NEWSZINE

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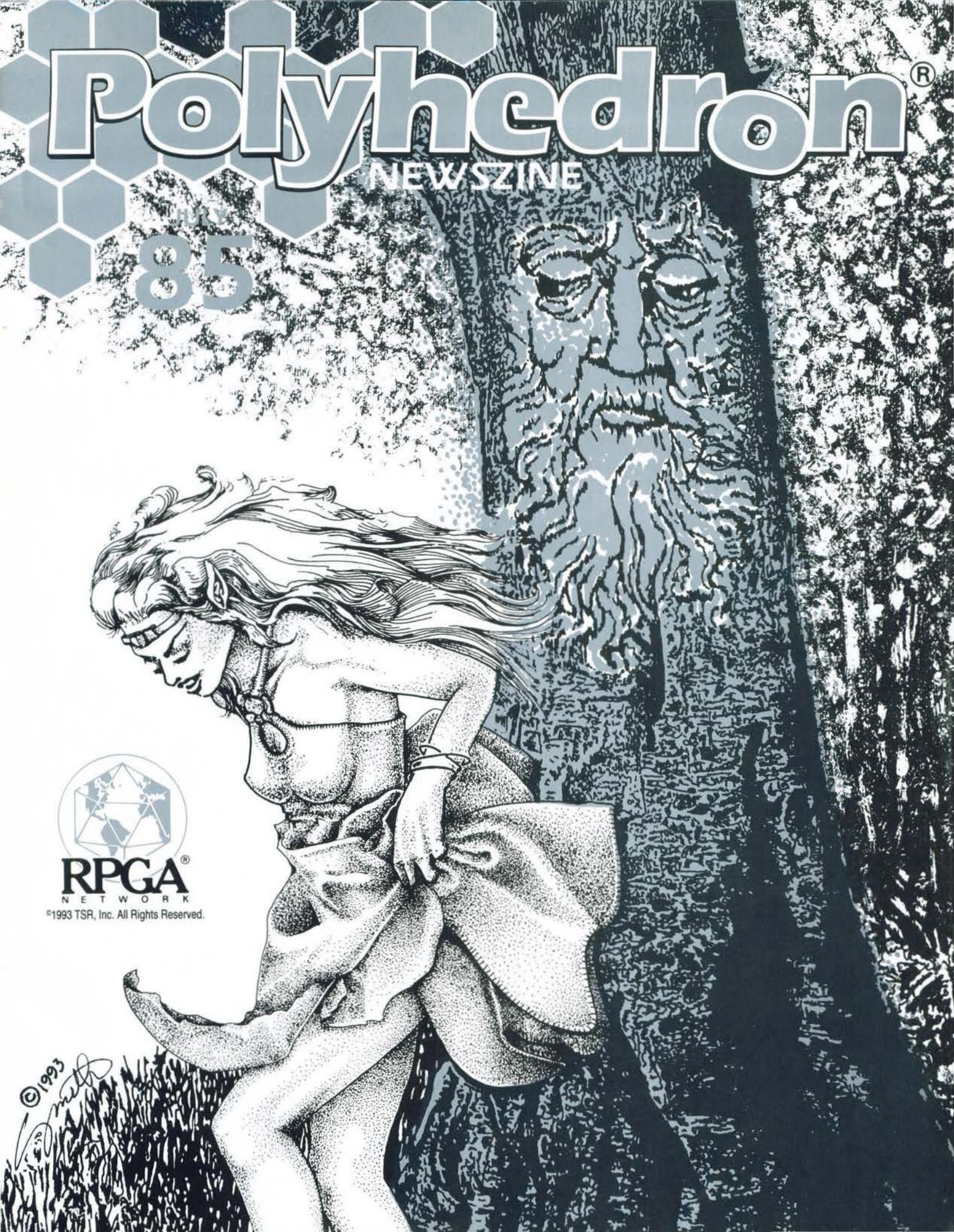

RPGA®
NETWORK

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The Third Degree

Dali Gone Wild In A Role Playing Setting

from the gaming casebook of Inspector Jeff Cisneros

I was in a museum wishing I had something better to do besides listening to critics talk about Picasso and look at paintings of melted watches, when one of my informants pulled me away from my fate.

"Inspector, dere's dis guy with a name like a bird call who wants to talk to 'ya."

Gathering my shattered wits about me, I snapped, "Lead me to this guy!" Breathing a sigh of relief, I lit a Lucky and took to the mean streets again. I immediately shook my head, things looked different. This definitely wasn't Kansas anymore. Soon this guy with a pair of weird shades approached me.

"Cisneros, look at this and you might get home again."

Just as I was about to sock this guy, he handed me a packet. "Over the Edge, eh?" Thinking it over, I decided to save the knuckle-dusting for later.

Over the Edge

The first thing you see is an illustration of a man with a hangman's knot as a tie. The opening words are a quotation from William S. Burroughs: "Nothing is true, anything is possible, everything is permitted."

This is quite the understatement, Over the Edge is very much like walking into a real-life Salvador Dali painting. The art is very grim. I was personally glad the interior sketches were pencil, as color would have made the pictures almost too intense.

The text is a simple and remarkably humorous description of the game world. An outline of the game rules are tucked inside. This relaxed style is a trademark of Jonathan Tweet, the designer of this game and of Ars Magica fame.

Psycho-Reality/Psycho-Surreality

The world of Over the Edge is Al-Amarja, an island reminiscent of a Philip K. Dick novel with a mixture of the Outer Limits thrown in. Al-Amarja is geographically located 80 miles north of Libya and 90 miles east of Tunisia. The "normal" rules of reality do not apply, and this is rationalized by making this place a society of outcasts, misfits, and the "dregs" of polite society. The system's setting is dark and depressing, with all the implications that go with that. I personally would not recommend this system for the easily offended or nervous, however as a more mature campaign it is ideal for highly creative, well-read folk. I personally find the cultural sub-references clever, but this can be limiting.

Character Creation

Creating a character with this system is an easy task. The steps are there, but with no true "classes" for characters. You begin by developing a concept for your character—unsuspecting tourist, professor on sabbatical studying decadent social systems, and writers of experimental fiction are three examples. This should be accomplished within the limits of what your GM allows. Pick four TRAITS, a central trait, two side traits, and a flaw. Add a motivation for doing what your character does, a secret to hide, and an important person to admire, and fill in your background and equip your character. This allows maximum creativity, but can be daunting. The process can be simple if you are prepared or time-consuming if you are picky. This is good, as there are no charts to hunt for, just simple outlines of "how to."

Playing the Game

This game requires an even higher degree of creativity on the GM's part. The setting is there, examples are given, but the process is almost 100% up to the GM. In my playtest of the game, I found the system flows quite nicely, allowing players to take actions with the GM setting difficulty factors to the task at hand. The only dice are six-siders, and a number of them are assigned to roll above a target number; the more difficult a task, the higher the target number. Some situations call for a "roll off" so to speak, highest roll wins. The simplicity of this system is to be admired.

Overview

I like "Over the Edge." It is a simple system to learn and is easily balanced for role-playing and action in any proportion. My reservations are based on the setting and perception of morality within the setting.

I recommend this game for a more mature gamer, as some of the situations and settings might be too adult for the younger crowd. In addition, game balance is critical with this system. With an experienced judge this game should work easily, but due to the open-ended nature of this game, an inexperienced judge can be easily run over by more experienced players.

Keep this in mind, and you should have a good campaign.

Over the Edge
Psycho-surreal Roleplaying
Atlas Games
Price: $22.00
Designer: Jonathan Tweet
Product Information:
Atlas Games
PO Box 406
Northfield, MN 55057

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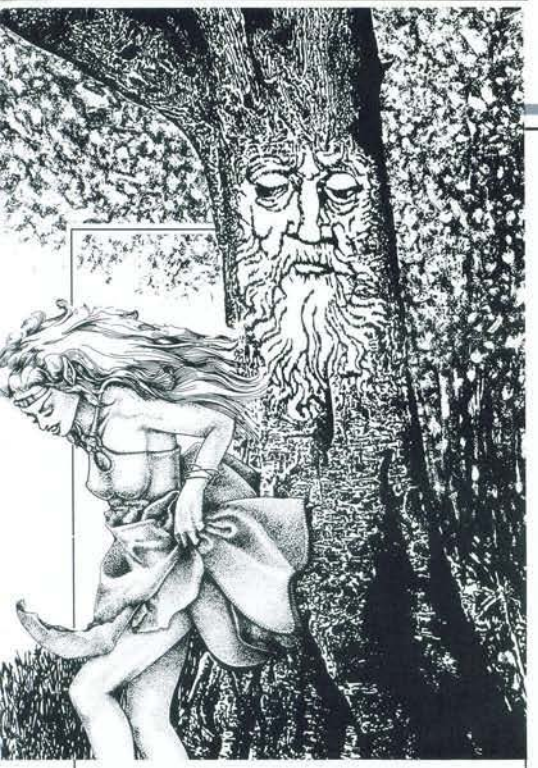

About the Cover

The Newszine's own Larry Smith sketched this view of Silverwood and an elven friend.

Publisher
James Ward

Editor
Jean Rabe

Associate Editor
Skip Williams

Graphic Director
Larry Smith

Cartographer
Diesel

Production Staff
Tracey Zamagne
Norm Ritchie

Subscriptions
Charmaine Snyder

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Notes From HQ

An Organization By Any Other Name

Facelifts can do wonders.

And a facelift is just what we're going to give the RPGA® Network.

The Network has been around more than a dozen years. It's changed a lot during that time, and it has grown to meet the membership's varying needs.

But we've resolved ourselves to be more responsive still.

For starters, we're designing new membership cards. Some of these will be keyed to levels. As you advance to a Master, Grand Master, or Paragon level judge or player, you'll receive a new card that boasts your status.

We're planning other changes, too, some cosmetic and some more substantial. And we want your help.

The Name Game

ROLE PLAYING GAME ASSOCIATION™ Network. It's quite a mouthful.

But is it appropriate anymore?

Should we have a new name with a bit more spark? Something that's not quite such a mouthful?

And while we're at it, what about the title of this magazine—the POLYHEDRON® Newszine. What you're holding in your hands is named after a many-sided dice.

What would you call this organization if you had a chance to name it?

What would you title our official magazine?

Making A Contest Of It

Well, there's the challenge—decide whether the Network and its magazine should have new names.

While you're at it, tell us what you like and don't like about the Network and what services you would like to see offered.

Send your responses to:

What's In A Name
RPGA® Network
P.O. Box 515
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

Deadline: September 1.
Prizes: Members who submit winning names will receive an assortment of TSR, Inc. products and a membership extension.

ConnCon

One of the more pleasurable aspects of working at Network HQ is setting aside a few weekends to leave Wisconsin behind and attend conventions.

A convention I visited recently was ConnCon in Danbury, CT. One of my favorite gaming fests, ConnCon boasted a plethora of new tournaments this year, including two Living City events open to all members and a Living City team event for Network Clubs. The Valiant 13th Regiment walked away (well, bounced and jumped might be more accurate) with the massive club trophy, defeating a field of a dozen challengers. It was a narrow victory, as the competition was exacting. Rival club members dared The Valiant 13th Regiment to enter the club event at the GEN CON® Game Fair.

Chris Doyle won the convention's tournament-writing competition and was awarded an embroidered Network jacket. Chris penned two of the convention's events. His scenarios are well-written, exciting, and should not be missed.

Highlights of ConnCon included watching Clint Heilmann dramatize past convention experiences in the hallway outside of convention-control, and playing in a Grand Masters session with convention coordinator Willi Burger as the DM. The adventure involved a weeks-long trip as caravan guards. However, our group only made it to the third day of the journey.

The focal point of the convention was the charity events. An AD&D® game benefit tournament and a charity auction raised more than $1,600 for the American Heart Association. The auction featured Living City items, original convention artwork, Japanese game books, and a ceramic skull that played "Take Me Out To The Ballgame." The bidding was fierce, and the bidders were very generous.

Hot Times At Spring Fantasy

Run in conjunction with the Little Wars miniature convention, Spring Fantasy offered nearly a dozen role playing events for gamers of all ages.

The convention was held in the Woodfield Hilton near Chicago, and the miniature and role playing events took place in separate wings of the convention center. Gamers who enjoyed both genres found themselves running from one end of the hotel to the other to make their next event on time. This wasn't an effort to segregate the types of games, it was simply the way the facility was laid out.

The convention center itself was the main topic of conversation with the attendees. While the rooms were nicely appointed, there was a slight problem with water. It was hot—even when the cold water faucet was turned on.

"Let it run awhile," a hotel staffer told a group of gamers.

They complied, and the water got hotter.

By the second day of the convention, most of the gamers learned that by running the bathroom sink for several minutes, flushing the toilet 10 times, and turning on the water in the tub, you could eventually get a reasonably cool shower.

The competition was rather heated, too. Regional Director Ed Peterson of Indiana ended up winning almost everything he entered.

Corey Lemon, son of veteran gamer Randall Lemon, put in an excellent showing for his first convention. He was awarded a prize for best new gamer. Look out for him at future conventions.

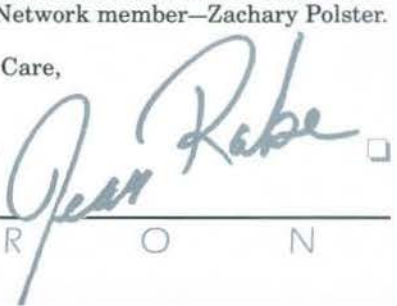
Events included tournaments for the Living City, GAMMA WORLD® game, BOOT HILL® game, and AD&D® game. A Benefit tournament, coupled with a charity auction, raised more than $200 for the Theresa Volunteer Fire Department.

Convention coordinator Keith Polster (and Regional Director for Wisconsin and Illinois) was on proverbial pins and needles most of the weekend. It wasn't the games he was worried about; it was his wife. She was ready to deliver at any moment.

The convention went off without a hitch. However, 15 minutes after Keith arrived home, he was speeding off to the hospital. A few hours later there was a new Network member—Zachary Polster.

Take Care,

Jean



Letters

Too Many First-Run Tournaments And A Lack Of Letters

I was very disappointed that there were no letters to the editor in POLYHEDRON® Newszine #81. The letters section is the only part of the Newszine that I consistently read from beginning to end every time.

If the lack of letters was because of space, I'm begging the editors to make more space. If their absence was because there were no letters to print, I'm begging the members to please write some.

The letters section of the Newszine is a way not only for the members to let the editorial staff know what they like (so they can do more of it), but it's also an indirect way for the members to communicate with each other. Many times, the majority of the letters will be in response to a comment made by another member.

Although I regret the fact that the letters to the editor section was empty, I was pleased with issue #81 overall. As always, I enjoyed *The Living Galaxy,* even though I don't play space RPGs. But I also enjoyed *The Third Degree* and *Of Mechs and Manga.* I don't remember seeing these two columns before, and I would like to see more of them, especially *The Third Degree.*

If the members need a reason to write letters, they should follow the lead of *The Third Degree* and write letters about games they have purchased. I always enjoy hearing comments about game systems so that I can get a better idea about whether or not I want to buy them.

If the only information I had available was from advertisements and store owners, I would buy up every game, thinking that they were all terrific. The fact is that different game players enjoy different types of games. So, I hope that Jeff Cisneros continues writing *The Third Degree,* and I hope that the rest of the members follow his lead.

Jeff Mills
Milltown, IN

A letters column did not appear in issue #81 because we had very few letters to pick from that month. We've noticed that letters arrive in batches, usually after a controversial column or after a big convention. We'd like to receive letters all the time, as it lets us know what we're doing right and wrong.

Convention Tournaments

Recently, a lot of conventions have opted to run only "first-run" RPGA® Network events. We would like to urge convention directors to avoid such practices. By running only first-run events, a convention in Connecticut or Ohio might be ignoring great tournaments which have been run only at a small con in Florida, Hawaii, or England. This makes no sense. It under-utilizes the Network's good tournaments, while instead producing an abundance of mediocre or even bad tournaments.

We understand the desire to have a first-run Grand Masters or even Masters for those players who travel a lot. But if a three-day convention is going to run more than 15 tournaments, there is no need to make them *all* first-run. No one can play in 15+ tournaments, and players always can find some tournaments that haven't previously been run in the region. And if a person goes to a con with 20 events, only four of which are new and 16 of which he or she has played in, it is probably time for that person to do a little judging.

Another problem with all-first-run conventions is the pressure it puts on HQ to edit and produce a large number of tournaments in a short period of time. Because of the strict deadline (the con date), many tournaments which were not particularly well-written, but which had excellent potential, will not be edited well enough to make them into truly good tournaments.

It is our experience that "all first-run events" really means "mostly so-so events." Conventions should avoid this problem by using the best available tournaments to their fullest extent. We understand that conventions like WINTER FANTASY and GLATHRICON (small or mid-sized conventions with relatively few events, but a large percentage of nationwide attendees) or the GEN CON® Game Fair (which is always a special case) may be better served running mostly new events, but this is not the case for most other conventions.

Brett and Cyndi Bakke
Arlington, VA

We'd like to hear from the membership on this issue—both convention-goers and convention directors. What do you think about Network tournaments at conventions? Should conventions be limited to a certain number of tournaments? What about first-run tournaments, should their number be limited at a convention? Do you only attend conventions with first-run events? We'll print some of the best responses here.

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The Everwinking Eye

The Pride Of The North

by Ed Greenwood

"Zhentil Keep? An inviting little place; I've been invited into their dungeons more than once."
Dharyssha Dawntower, Thief Extraordinaire, said to a Waterdhavian minstrel,
Year of Many Hawks

Elminster's guided tour of the Realms continues to delve into the life and lore of Zhentil Keep; this time, we'll conclude our look at The Pride of The North, as Zhents sometimes call their city (few others in Faerun use the phrase without sarcasm).

Last time, we looked at "The Long Road"; this is the extended, torturous overland trade route the Dark Network is trying to establish through toil and intrigue. People who bear the Zhentarim no love call the route "The Black Road" or "The Blood Road." The Zhentarim carefully guard both the route and all information about it. They know that news of any successful defiance of their patrols and their control over Yellow Snake Pass and the Goblin Marches would damage them far more than the loss of one caravan's worth of trade.

Desperate outlaws and hardened thugs who take to brigandry are drawn to The Long Road by its riches and by its often remote route (which would seem to make ambushes more likely to succeed).

The Zhentarim are constantly working to strengthen the Road. They have set up cairns and hidden caches along the route, and have carefully trained a cadre of wizards to become familiar with them for fast and easy teleportation to these spots in the event of trouble.

The Zhentarim in the Field

The original Realms boxed set details Zhentarim patrols in the Darkhold area; note that in the event of real or suspected trouble, the Zhentarim tend to double and triple patrols, to expend Art as if it were nothing at all, and hurl hundreds of men after a single monster or a dozen brigands. They show little regard for the comfort or safety of their troops. In fact, they don't have much regard for the comfort or safety of their troops.

Zhentarim patrols do not turn back because it grows dark, or split up to chase down fleeing fugitives; they charge in with hob-nailed boots and blades in both hands. The Zhents are enthusiastically brutal, and atrocities are fine with them, survivors are not.

Who's Who

The most powerful priests of The Black Altar are said to be Casildar and Zhessae; the most powerful mages under Manshoon are Sememmon (who usually resides at Darkhold, which he commands in the name of the Zhentarim), Sarhthor, and a second rank of mages that includes Thagdal, Miraun, Ashemmi, Eeryth, Phanadar, and Halaguth.

The secretive Sarhthor appears in the novel *Spellfire;* I suggest that DMs keep his level and powers mysterious; this makes him more effective against PCs rising in levels as play progresses. Thagdal, Miraun, and Ashemmiare are outlined in the *Forgotten Realms Adventures* sourcebook. Details of the remaining three wizards follow:

Eeyryth: LE hm W9, an ambitious, grasping mage with a talent for devising new spells. His brilliance has earned him much personal power within the Network. His superiors have provided him with a personal, hidden spell laboratory, and with a constant beholder escort. The eye tyrant's job is to make sure he doesn't try anything spectacular to bring down the entire upper ranks of the Zhentarim for his own gain (or just by accident, while experimenting).

Phanadar: CE hm W9, an incredibly arrogant, preening mage who delights in softly-played intrigues. He often seizes upon visitors to use in his little schemes. Such allies often end up betrayed, framed for one of Phanadar's own crimes. This wizard is so smooth that he's survived almost a decade of knifing Zhentarim colleagues without himself being marked or slain. He is known to command some odd and rare spells.

Halaguth: NE hm W9, a grim, careful, silent wizard given to watching and remembering. He always has spells and items ready for any eventuality. Halaguth looks behind himself often, and always hums faintly. He is known to be coldly calm in battle, and Manshoon values him highly—while being careful to make sure he does not grow too powerful. Halaguth never operates on his own or cooperates with outsiders; instead, he reveals all to Manshoon in hopes of a reward.

An inner ring of advisors sits near the top of the Zhentarim hierarchy. Beneath this privileged circle many junior members, particularly the "magelings," struggle viciously for more power. The high-ranking members use their juniors as pawns and occasionally as sacrificial fodder. Details of the Zhentarim can be found in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Adventures* sourcebook, the Realms boxed set, the *Castles* boxed accessory, the *FR7 Hall of Heroes* sourcebook, the modules *FRC2 Curse of the Azure Bonds* and *FRE1 Shadowdale,* and in the novel *Spellfire.*

There are important citizens of Zhentil Keep, however, who are not part of the Zhentarim or its allied Lords or soldiery.

Three of these well-known merchants who deal with outsiders are Kronn Tazlabbar (LN hm F5; furs, jewelry, draft and riding animals), Sonchiir Talathen (CN hm F3 [ST 18/04]; wagons, sledges, and carts), and Ringult Hornhelm (CN hm F14 who arms himself with many hidden magical weapons). Ringult imports various metals from Thar. In Zhentil Keep, he trades weapons and precious metals to visitors in return for foodstuffs. Ringult then sells the provender to the city Lords for the use of the Zhentilar armies. Gifts of the best wine buys Ringult the military's continued goodwill.

Many smaller, fiercely independent traders also make a living in Zhentil Keep, but none will cross the Zhentarim. These merchants fear a slow, painful death under torture in some hidden cellar, or a press gang visit and sudden, brutal (and often ultimately fatal) military service.

The Hazards of Business

Business owners in Zhentil Keep need not take special precautions against daylight, brute-force robberies. If attacked, they merely shout to the loiter-

ing soldiers who frequent the streets, then stand back to watch the fun.

An almost constant stream of young and overconfident thieves comes to the city hoping to plunder the vast spell libraries and magic item caches that the Zhentarim are known to have. Most of these soon die—usually in Zhentarim magical experiments or in priestly torture-sessions supervised by beholders. The survivors tend to grow discouraged and look elsewhere for easier prey.

Some magic items of value have gone missing over the years, but most of these were not stolen. Occasionally, mages hide items, then vanish or perish without passing on details of what they have done. Speculation as to the whereabouts of such treasures is a popular tavern-drinking pastime in Zhentil Keep; visitors are warned that the Zhentarim have eyes and ears everywhere in the city—and that some such talk is undoubtedly begun by their agents so they can learn who is interested in such things.

The Zhentarim's oppressive military rule would undoubtedly cause the flight of most merchants (and their wealth) from the city were it not balanced by swift, just police work and light taxation. The only peacetime tax demanded of visitors and residents is a "gate tax" of 1 gp per laden wagon passing into or out of the city gates, 1 sp per person or beast bearing trade goods, and 5 gp per laden ship leaving or tying up at a city dock.

A cadre of spies known as the "naugorls" (devil-worms) keep watch over Zhentil Keep's inns and taverns. They eavesdrop on all the clientele, even in stables and bedrooms. These spies report to a chief known only as "Night Fingers."

This mysterious officer is Ashurel Sstendarr, a LE hf T9 (Dexterity 18, very acrobatic), who lives at The High Hall of Zhentil Keep, masquerading as a lady servant. She reports to the Lords in secret, and does their dirty work for them: kidnappings, arrests, impersonations, framings, and slayings.

Ashurel has almost 600 Worms under her command, and about 400 of these are skilled at combat. Most Worms know nothing about their organization beyond their own orders, the co-agents they happen to have worked with, and their immediate superiors. Inquiries about such matters get the curious killed.

Entertainment

Zhents tend to be a hard-drinking lot, but favor house-parties over taverns. Such private parties can involve sensual revelry, shady business deals, and so on without a lot of public fuss and bother.

Native Zhents usually go to taverns only if they are military just returned to the city after a tour of duty, are in a bad mood and looking for a fight, are interested in meeting a new companion, or have business with visitors that they do not wish to conduct at their homes. As a result, Zhentil Keep's taverns tend to be dimly-lit, hushed places, with rough manners and brooding atmospheres.

They include *The Cloven Ogre* (which has a signboard depicting an axe-split beast-man with an understandably pained expression on the two halves of his face), *The Whipwalker's Cloak* (don't ask), *The Axe And Minotaur* (a soldiers' tavern), *The Black Avatar* (the most "intellectual" and sinister of all the taverns), *The Roaring Dragon* (the largest, brightest, and best known to outsiders; a lively place), and *The Shield Faces North* (an old, quiet place paneled and furnished with stained, carved, and curving wood, much favored by visiting dwarves and older merchants).

Zhentil Keep's inns are comparatively few; they tend to be large, spired stone places, rather cold and gray and functional. They also tend to be fairly expensive: 3 gp/head/night is a typical "low board" rate. This includes a simple breakfast and stabling and feed for one mount, but only a wooden trestle bed in a room shared with three other guests, with a chamber pot but no bathing facilities beyond a towel and a large basin of ice-cold water. Most inns are heavily guarded by private hireswords and by police patrols and the everpresent Worms. Inn guards take a dim view of fighting, and are likely to eject brawlers into the streets for the night, leaving them to the mercy of the press gangs. Corpses and the badly wounded are customarily dumped out onto the cobbles.

Perhaps the best of these rather grim establishments is *The Silver Trumpet,* in the northwestern part of the city.

From *The Trumpet's* shabby opulence the quality of fare and furnishings descends through *The Heroes' Rest* (fairly cozy, if noisy), and *Oparil's Tower.* Oparil is a former entertainer whose taste in decor runs to tapestries and draperies that would be nicer if they didn't give off clouds of dust whenever disturbed. The latter place is lit only by little scented brass oil lamps. *The Eagle of the North* is drab, tired, and very dark. *The Serpent's Eye* is a creaking old ruin of a place which lets in water in wet weather and cold drafts all the time; it is favored by fighting-men and known for its gambling and frequent brawls. Finally, there is *The Pride of Zhentil Keep.* This establishment is dirty and cold and has very little unbroken furniture.

Visitors to Zhentil Keep cannot escape seeing the arms of the city, which are displayed on all the city's gates and on banners flying from the walls. The arms are a black gauntlet, back outward, clenched into a fist, vertical upon an orange shield, knuckles toward the top of the shield. The shield is bordered with crimson. Resting upon the mailed fist is a great red gem. In battle, this device is displayed on purple banners so dark as to be almost black.

The Zhentarim themselves seldom display any device, and have no uniform. Allies and hirelings sometimes display the badge of the Zhentarim for their own protection during a battle or hunt: a red circle on a black field.

Visitors are warned that duelling is illegal in Zhentil Keep—those who try are usually forcibly "invited" to join the Zhentilar soldiery, since they have such a need for violence. Note that anyone drawing a weapon during a tavern brawl—as opposed to snatching up a tankard, chair, or table—is deemed a duelist.

The Zhents consider bloodletting wasteful. However, if there is a fight and one combatant is slain before the police (known to the locals as "the Hands") get there, the victor is usually allowed to go unpunished—unless the victim is a known Worm, Zhentarim, Hand, or Zhentilar soldier. A person involved in more than two such deaths in a short period quietly acquires a police escort. These hands often will leap in with drawn swords if further conflicts occur, and may well "accidentally" sheathe them in the troublemaker's body.

Zhentil Keep is not the sort of city where one should look for trouble. Except for Hands, no citizen of Zhentil Keep will aid someone who is being robbed, beaten, attacked, or who is wounded—unless the victim loudly and hastily offers a reward for doing so. Bystanders still won't help unless they believe the victim can deliver the reward, and that the payment is worth the personal risks of getting involved. Even the Hands turn a blind eye if the aggressor is a Zhentarim (and the magelings often throw their weight around in the streets).

❑

Silverwood

An ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Scenario for 6-8 Characters, Level 6 and up

by Mark Liberman

A glen east of Elvenblood Pass is home to Silverwood, a unique and enigmatic being. Silverwood looks like a large willow tree, but he can *veil* himself and change his appearance as he wills. Silverwood's influence extends over the hilly forest around him for at least 30 miles. A large settlement of elves, possibly survivors from city of Ylraphon, has made this section of the enchanted forest its home. Treaties with the local humans guarantee the borders.

Except for a few squabbles over hunting rights, all has been well with Silverwood, the elves, and their neighbors for many decades. Now, however, Jalena Lavender, a local human sorceress with a passion for exotic scents, wishes to harvest a few of Silverwood's branches.

Jalena's henchmen have been violating the treaty line in their efforts to locate Silverwood, and the elves have become increasingly hostile to the local humans. The PCs, who might be in the area for any number of reasons, represent the best hope for a solution. Silverwood does not know who is trying to harm him, but he does know that the elves never will be able to make friendly inquires among the humans. Accordingly, he sends the PCs a telepathic message, asking for help.

Players' Introduction

At first, the young had strange dreams. Then the dreams came to the eldest. Finally, everyone in the village shared a dream—even outsiders like you. Your shared vision showed you Silverwood, a beautiful one-of-a-kind tree of knowledge. Silverwood is a willow tree that was thought to have died long ago. In the dream, destruction threatens Silverwood. The tree needs your help.

The village elders summoned you, begging you to aid this tree. They said a messenger stationed with a wood elf patrol at a guard post in the forest will be able to direct you to Silverwood.

"We don't know what is jeopardizing the tree," the chief elder said.

"But we know it must be something serious. You must leave quickly to reach the messenger and find the tree."

Still haunted by the vision, you accepted the charge and left on your mission a week ago. The trip has been uneventful so far, passing elven villages and guard posts—none with a sign of this Silverwood messenger. It is getting late now, and you hope to stop for the night. Ahead on the trail you see another elven guard post. Perhaps the messenger is here. The post consists of a small hut on the left side of the trail and a row of five two-man tents on the right. Several elves are about. All of them look tired and a few are injured.

Elves (6): Int Average; AL NG; AC 5; MV 12; HD 2 (F2); hp 15 each (currently 2 each); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Special; SZ M; ML 13; XP 35 each.

Captain Greenbow: Int High; AL NG; AC 2; MV 12; HD 5 (F5); hp 35 (currently 12); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Special; SZ M; ML 13; XP 175.

Half-elf, Tal-Ric: Int Average; AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Special; SZ M; ML 13; XP 15.

Tal-Ric is an agent of the elvish king who is investigating the rising tensions along the borders. Today, he is posing as a dealer in rare incense and herbs. He pretends to be just passing through, looking for exotic plants. His features are only slightly elvish, and he pretends to be only mildly interested in the PCs.

The guards have been warned to expect the party. The elves were injured early this morning. Greenbow took the patrol into the woods when they heard loud noises and eerie growls. As the searched the undergrowth, a force of ogres attacked. Half the patrol was captured—including the messenger who was waiting to talk to the PCs.

Greenbow and his patrol will not leave their post again. However, they strongly urge the PCs to save the messenger and their captured comrades. If the PCs ask for information about the ogres, an elf says he noticed one of them carried a two-handed sword, while the rest had clubs. One of the troopers thinks he saw another ogre lurking in the background. The ogre was continually mumbling to himself. He had a staff topped by what looked like a large wolf's skull.

Captain Greenbow tells the PCs if they want to save Silverwood, they will have to rescue the messenger.

"Head toward the rising sun and to the high peak that appears barren. It was in that direction we encountered the ogres. We call the place the Barren Crown. No one remembers ever seeing anything living up there. But as we fled we saw the ogres were heading in that direction."

On The Trail

The ogres' trail is barely discernable. In places, the tracks have been covered or obliterated—a sure sign that the ogres went out of their way to hide their trail. If they follow captain Greenbow's directions, the PCs quickly come upon the remnants of a battle. A thorough search of the area reveals a large shield with ripped arm straps, a crushed helmet, and elf footprints. This is where the elves fought the ogres. Characters with the tracking proficiency can find marks that indicate bodies were dragged away. Farther along, the tracker can find other signs of hurried passage, including drops of blood.

Even if they can't track the ogres, the PCs can find the ogres by moving toward the bald crown:

Continuing your pursuit of the ogres, you come upon two wooden stakes that straddle a dirt trail. Each stake is roughly seven feet high and is topped with a polished humanoid skull. In the distance you see a village.

Ogre Village

If the PCs take special precautions to approach the ogre village, they can gain surprise. However, if the PCs talk amongst themselves, argue, or make noise, the ogres know someone is coming and will be prepared.

A battle standard adorned with skulls, feathers, and animal horns stands in the center of the village. All ogres within 30′ of the standard gain the benefits of a *prayer* spell. The effect is dispelled if the standard is destroyed or moved.

Whether the PCs stroll casually into the village or attack, Grazno, the ogre chief, leads his warriors against them. The children do not join in the fight. If the PCs kill Grazno and Mazk, the remainder of the tribe tries to escape.

Ogres, young (4): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 1; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT Nil; Dmg Nil; SA Nil; SZ M; ML 11; XP 35.

Ogre, females (6): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (spear); SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 12; XP 175.

Ogre, warriors (6): Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 25 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8+4 (long swords); SA +2 to damage; SZ L; ML 12; XP 175.

These ogres are using captured long swords and have not yet mastered them. Therefore, they suffer a +2 penalty on their initiative rolls.

Ogre, Draal: Int Average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 9; HD 7; hp 35; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+3; SA +2 w/weapon; SZ L; ML 12; XP 420.

Draal used to be the leader, and he is the largest ogre in the village. However, he was injured and still has a sore head. He gave up his chieftain title when he had trouble remembering things—including who were the enemy. He wields a massive club.

Ogre Chieftain, Grazno: Int Average; AL CE; AC 4; MV 9; HD 7; hp 36; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+6; SA +2 w/weapon; SZ L; ML 12; XP 650.

Grazno, the newly-appointed chieftain, is a vicious fighter who always believed he should lead the tribe. He relishes battle.

Ogre Shaman, Mazk: Int Average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 9; HD 7; hp 29; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA +2 "to hit" with weapon, spells; SZ L; ML 12; XP 650.

Spells remaining: *Cause fear, chant, spiritual hammer, continual light, hold person.*

Mazk likes to stay out of the battle until his spells are exhausted. Even then, he is hesitant about entering the fray. He prefers to keep his dirty skin intact. He carries all of his wealth on him—2 sp, a necklace of teeth and finger bones, an agate (worth 60 gp), a large black pearl (worth 900 gp), and a silver earring (worth 20 gp).

If the PCs defeat the ogres and search the village, they find little of value in the

majority of the huts. However, in the leader's hut, which is larger and better constructed than the rest, are four suits of chain mail, a suit of *elven chain mail +1,* a small silver box with a sliver of wood in it, two giant otter pelts (each worth 250 gp), a blue crystal (worth 75 gp), an amethyst (worth 143 gp), and a jade stick pin (worth 1,805 gp).

The elf prisoners are being held in the shaman's hut.

Elves (6): Int Average; AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; HD 2 (F2); hp 15 each (currently 1 each); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Special; SZ M; ML 13; XP 35 each.

Fleetwood: Int High; AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; HD 1 (F1); hp 5 each (currently 1); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Special; SZ M; ML 13; XP 35 each.

If the PCs rescue the captives, the elves say they need to return home. The messenger explains that the sliver inside the silver box is all they need to find Silverwood.

> "When floating in holy water, the sliver from the great tree of knowledge will point its way home," the messenger says. He wishes you luck and warns you that if the tree is not saved, all of the forest could fall with it.

If the PCs chat with the elves, they learn the elves were unaware an ogre village was so close to their guardposts. The elves are certain the ogres discovered the guardpost and lured the elves into the woods for an ambush.

Misdirections

> Pressing onward, you travel a few more miles and come to a clearing where three trails meet. There is a small peasant hut to the west of the crossroads. Smoke comes from a stone chimney above the thatched roof. There is a garden near the hut, and a grave is nearby. Looking at the grass, you see broad scorch marks.
>
> Also in the clearing is a signpost with three markers on it pointing in different directions. The signs read: Silverwood, Manglo, Elfwoods.

If the PCs examine the post, they discover it has been rotated recently, as the dirt is disturbed around its base. If the PCs listen, they hear sobs coming from inside the cottage.

The hut belongs to a jackalwere, who is appearing as a human. His mate was slain yesterday when a half-dozen humans calling themselves "The Collectors" passed through. He is willing to speak with the PCs if they do not threaten him. He knows that The Collectors included a spellcaster and a fighter with a flaming sword. They were talking about finding this tree called Silverwood that they were hired to cut down. The jackalwere did not know or care what they were talking about. He was stricken with grief over the death of his mate. He saw them move the signpost and then start up the trail on the hillside.

Jackalwere: Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 4; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA Gaze causes sleep; SD Hit only by iron and +1 or better magical weapons; SZ S; ML 11; XP 420.

Silver Confrontations

When the PCs are finished with this area, they can continue on their mission. If they did not talk to the jackalwere or inspect the signpost, it is possible they will take the trail that the sign designates as "To Silverwood."

If a PC with the tracking proficiency makes a successful check, he or she notices day-old human tracks that follow the trail up the hill. If the PCs take this trail, they are on course. Otherwise, allow them to follow one of the other trails until they are hopelessly lost. Eventually they will come back and take the right trail.

The Collectors have left a rear guard to watch the trail. From their high vantage point on the hill, they spotted the PCs at the cabin, and they believe the PCs are jackalweres following them to take revenge. The Collectors have set up a trap of rocks and dirt, and when the party passes a certain point, the evil humans will start a landslide and continue on their way. One of the Collectors, Jalock, stays behind to pick off any survivors.

There are several ways to detect the trap if the PCs are paying attention to their surroundings. A PC with tracking skill or a ranger can notice signs that the human bootprints are fresher, and it is obvious a pair of humans stayed in one spot for some time. This spot has a clear view of the cabin below.

If the PCs move off the trail and travel through the woods on the hill, they will avoid the landslide. However, if they continue on the path, The Collectors set the rocks and dirt cascading down on the heroes. The PCs caught in the slide suffer 3d10 points of damage, save vs. paralyzation for half damage.

Once the trap is sprung, Jalock, who is perched in a tree higher up on the hill, begins to fire arrows at them.

If Jalock is captured and questioned, he reluctantly admits that there are seven Collectors, one a spell caster. He does not know who hired them, but he knows they are supposed to kill a big silver-tinted tree. His job was to guard the spell caster. He said they decided to attack the jackalweres in the cabin just because they saw possible profit in the deed.

Jalock: Int Average; AL NE; AC 4 (chain, shield) (AC 0 because of his cover); MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 26; THAC0 18; #AT 1 or 2/1; Dmg 1-4 (dagger), 1-6+1 (*arrows +1*); SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 13; XP 175.

Jalock carries 14 *arrows +1*, 20 regular arrows, a silvered broad sword, and 120 gp in a small leather pouch. He wears an ornate silver ring on his left hand (worth 320 gp).

> Finally, you look down the hill and see a tree-covered plateau bordered by steep walls. The land has a silvery cast to it. There are a few crags, and boulders dot the landscape. The boulders are immense, 20 to 30 feet across. As you move closer you can see that all of the trees are oaks. There is no willow tree in sight.

Silverwood is here, using its *veil* power disguise itself as an oak. The Collectors arrived here before the PCs and found no sign of Silverwood, either.

The Collectors are here, too. If they hear the PCs approach, they hide behind boulders and prepare their strategy. They still believe the PCs are jackalweres bent on revenge.

The wizard begins by casting a *lightning bolt.* The *invisible* thief sneaks around behind the PCs and attempts to backstab a spellcaster, while The Collectors' fighters rush forward to melee. The wizard stays behind a boulder, popping out to cast spells.

Fighters (3): Int Average; AL NE; AC 4 (chain, shield); MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 24 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 13; XP 120 each.

The fighters each have 120 gp.

Dirty Mok Rake, leader: Int Average; AL NE; AC 3 (plate); MV 6; HD 7 (F7); hp 53; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-10+3 (STR, *+1 flametongue*; SA Nil; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 13; XP 1,400.

Dirty carries a scroll tube and a *potion of speed,* which he will drink if he hears the PCs coming. Dirty does not have anything else of value—he can't hold onto money. Inside the scroll tube is a piece of parchment that reads: "Mok, take Amezir the wizard and your motley band. Bring me three lower branches of the great silver willow tree. They must be harvested with a flaming blade at midnight. Wrap the branches in blankets padded with the tree's leaves. Then bring them to me...J.L."

Human Thief: Int Average; AL CE; AC 3 (DEX, +1 leather); MV 12; HD 5 (T5); hp 21; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6+1 (short sword +1); SA backstab x3; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 13; XP 420.

The thief carries picks and tools, an opal (worth 325 gp), and a blue pearl (worth 513 gp).

Human Wizard: Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 6 (DEX, *ring of protection +1*); MV 12; HD 7 (W7); hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6* (staff); SA Spells; SD Spells; MR Nil; SZ M; ML 13; XP 1,400.

The wizard also has *winged boots*, a *staff of striking (22 charges),* 87 gp, 7 pp.

Spells remaining: *Magic missile* (×2), *charm person, invisibility, web* (×2), *fireball, lightning bolt.*

> The evil band lies in defeat. Before you can attend to your own wounds, you discern one of the oak trees shimmering. Its leaves take on a silver glow, and the tree becomes a majestic willow. A craggy face forms on the trunk.
>
> "Thank you for answering my summons. Your defeat of these evil men is just the beginning. You have much work to do. You must find the person who ordered my destruction. A good place to start is the soil where these evil humans came from. It is a village called Manglo. You will have to retrace your steps, for it is on the other side of the hill. Begin there in your search for the mastermind."
>
> With that, the tree falls silent, its branches shimmer, and it once again looks like an oak.

Toward Manglo

The party should head down the trail to the south toward Manglo. Near midday it starts raining, lightly at first, but it turns to a steady downpour. As they press on, the PCs enter a section of woods claimed by a group of kech. The creatures have dug a pit in the trail and covered it with leaves, hoping to easily snare some dinner. Unless the PCs are being cautious, the lead party member will fall into the pit, suffering 1d6 points of damage.

If someone falls in the pit, or if the PCs detect it and step around it, the tree branches shake and the kechs begin screeching. The creatures will only fight if they are attacked or threatened.

If the PCs search the area, they find a single gold piece inside a splintered and scorched dogwood tree.

Kech (3): Int Average; AL NE; AC 4; MV 15, Cl 6; HD 5; hp 26, 23, 20; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-6; SA −5 to opponents surprise rolls; SD Traps; SZ M (6′ tall); ML 12; XP 650 each.

Manglo

As night falls, the rain stops and the PCs spot the lights of Manglo. The village is muddy and deserted. The only building open is the inn (location 9).

There are about 180 villagers, the majority of whom wear shabby clothing. Most of the residents are both poor and greedy. The village has eight major buildings and 30 peasant residences, each with four to eight occupants. The peasants are distrustful of outsiders, especially non-humans. Their lives are hard, and they have little useful information. However, from time to time one of them will say, "beware the shattered bark." People have disappeared in the vicinity of the dead dogwood tree.

1. Stable: There is nothing here except for a few tired plow horses.

2. Barn: Four pathetic-looking cows and a run down horse are the only animals housed here. Little Billy, age 9 and short for his age, shovels hay during the day and cares for the animals. If the PCs chat with Billy, he reveals that a powerful wizard who had lots of spells came through the village a few days ago. His description matches the wizard the PCs fought near Silverwood. Billy says the wizard spent a night at the inn.

3. Granary: There is nothing of interest here. There is a little grain stored here, but most of it is moldy.

4. Mill: This water-powered mill is operated by the Miller family: Storg, Millie, and their children Helda and Gavine. Their home is attached to the mill. The Millers are better off than most people in the village.

The Millers also rent and sell canoes. They charge 50 gp to rent a canoe for two weeks, 100 gp to buy a canoe. The canoes seat three people, and they have five available.

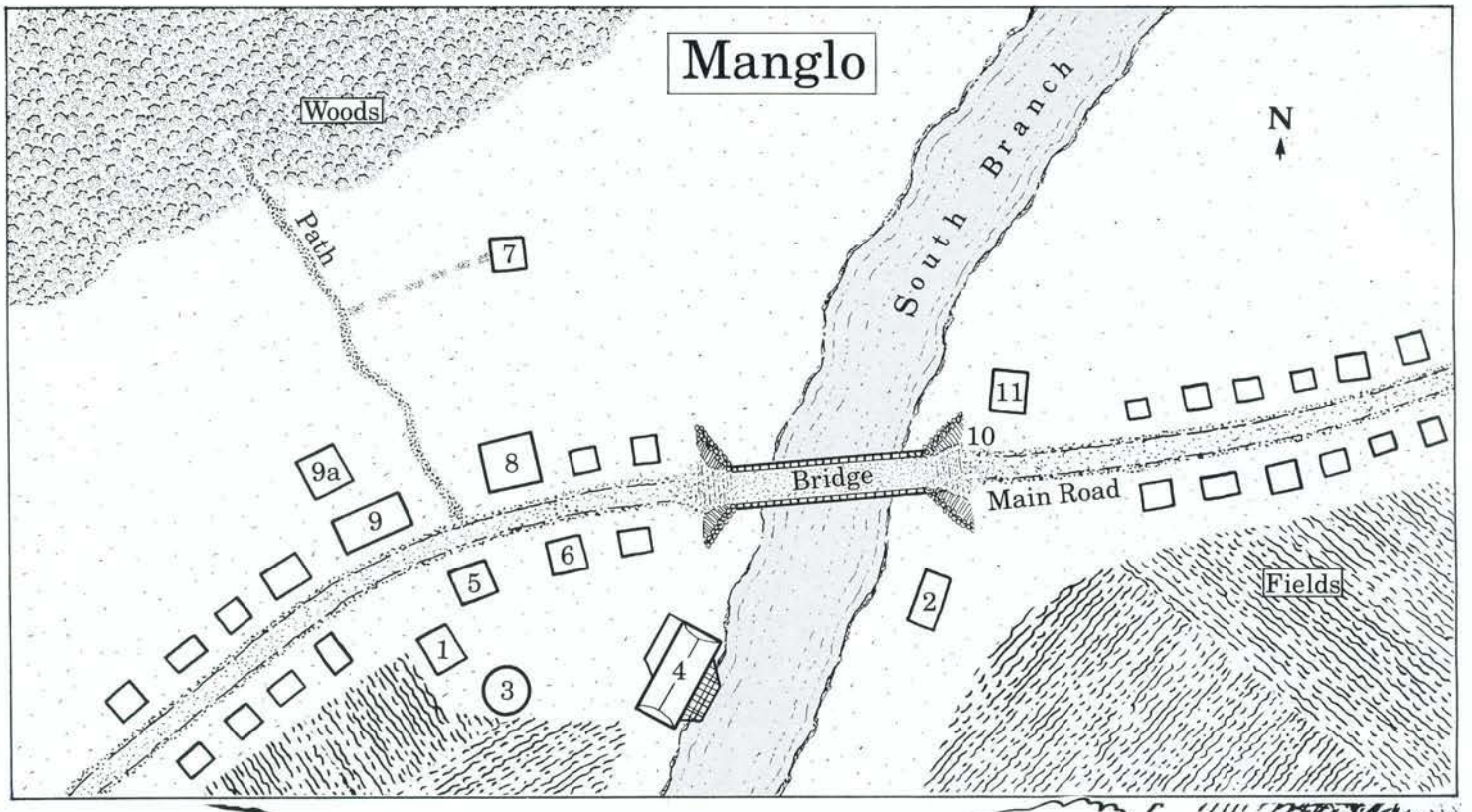
If the PCs treat the Millers with respect, they tell the PCs that they know a wizard named Amezir passed through here with a party of armed and dangerous men. The group spent an evening at the inn. If the PCs ask about J.L. Storg says he knows six people in town with the initials J.L.: Jamie Lacour, a peasant; Jim Lang, a peasant; Joe Lark, the clerk at the village hall; Jarni Larn, a ragged-looking trapper; Jack Loon, a handsome young man who works at the inn; and Jillian Loon, his wife.

5. Village elder's residence: This place looks like a mansion compared to the buildings in the rest of the village. The elder is Norgul Hemp. He is old, hard of hearing, and fragile. He is served by his equally-elderly assistant, Silvia. If the PCs ask Norgul a question, he thinks and thinks and thinks, then nods off to sleep. When the PCs wake him up, he replies to their question.

Norgul knows there are a couple of people in the village whose initials are J.L.—Jack and Jillian Loon. There is another individual, but he says he can't remember that person's name. With prodding, he recalls that the individual is Jolly Lawrence.

If the PCs ask Norgul why he hired Lancaster (see locations 9 & 11), he will first send Silvia out of the room and says it is none of the party's business. "I have my skeletons and I want them to stay in their closets." He will say no more. (Lancaster blackmailed Norgul into hiring him. Many years ago, Norgul "fixed" the bidding on the town portrait, see location 8. This knowledge would make Norgul very unpopular if word got out.)

6. Grim Residence: This home is much larger and better maintained than the other residences in the village. The PCs have no reason to visit it, but it might attract a curious PC's attention. It is home to Bill and Sally Grim, a wealthy couple. They are both bitter, as they lost two sons to the elves. The sons were caught poaching, and when an elven


Manglo
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patrol asked them to surrender they were too proud to comply. They fought and died. Their bodies were returned.

Bill is zero level (AC 10, 3 hit points). If the party presses for information, Bill gets indignant and pulls out a staff. He starts yelling and attacks the elves in the party. If he is injured or killed, the watch from location 11 arrives with weapons drawn. The watchmen arrest the party. If the PCs fight back, the watchmen use their *rod of rulership* on the party.

7. Larn Residence: Jarni Larn lives here. Jarni is a wereboar and a trapper by trade. He has dark hair and a crooked nose. He doesn't want to answer questions, and would prefer not to let the party in. If treated badly, Jarni tells the party to leave. As they turn to the door, he changes to boar form and attacks. The party receives a −1 to their surprise roll.

Jarni, Wereboar: Int Average; AL N; AC 4; MV 12; HD 5+2; hp 26; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SD Silver or +1 or better weapons to hit; SZ M; ML 13; XP 650.

If the party searches the place, they find 175 sp, 25 gp, 1 pp, a moonstone (45 gp), a topaz (650 gp), a gem-studded gold bracelet (4,000 gp), and A log of his hunting and trapping activities. The information in the log is useless to the PCs, and the handwriting does not match the scroll the PCs got from The Collectors.

8. Village Hall: This building has a main room filled with benches for town meetings. There also are two small offices at the back. The walls are decorated with many crude paintings of the village. Each year the village commissions an outside artist to paint a village scene. Each year a different person pays money to get his building or home painted at the center of the picture.

Joe Lark with his young apprentice Ethrea, is caretaker of the village archives. For a little money, Joe and Ethrea can give the PCs the names of all the villagers who have the initials "J.L." They are: Jamie Lacour, Jim Lang, Joan Land and Jole Land (peasants); Jarni Larn (trapper); Jack & Jill Loon (inn employees); and Joe Lark himself.

Ethrea remembers The Collectors, especially the dashing Bron. She is waiting for him to return.

9. The Brown Cup: This place is named for its earthenware cups, which are not only brown, but very dirty. That only adds to the foul taste of the local ale, which sells for 2 cp a cup, 4 cp to non-humans; cheap wine costs 1 sp, 2 sp to non-humans. There are five rooms upstairs; room rates are 5 sp for humans, 1 gp for non-humans. Both prices include breakfast. There is only one guest, Tal Ric (who is asleep), at the inn when the PCs first arrive in Manglo.

There is a much-used dart board in the main room. During the day and early evening the main room also holds 1d12+2 peasants who stare darkly at any non-humans in the party. All the locals have gone home for the night when the PCs arrive. Due to the hour, the inn staff will not be at all talkative during the PCs' first night.

Near the end of the PCs' first day in Manglo, two human knights arrive at the inn. They leave their war horses at the Brown Cup's stable (9A) and settle in for a long rest.

Sir Lawrence: Int Average; AL LN; AC 3; MV 9; HD 7 (F7); hp 61; THAC0 14; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8+5; SA two attacks a round with long sword at +1 "to hit," +3 damage from specialization and Strength 17; SZ M; ML 15; XP 975.

Magic Items: *Shield +1, potion of extra-healing, ring of spell storing* (*detect lie, speak with dead, detect charm*).

Sir William: Int High; AL LG; AC 3; MV 9; HD 7 (F7); hp 66; THAC0 14; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8+5; SA two attacks a round with long sword at +2 "to hit," +5 damage from specialization and Strength 18/23; SZ M; ML 15; XP 975.

Magic Items: *Chain mail +1.*

Lawrence and William are on an inspection tour for Duke Edouard, who is overlord of just about all the land from here north to Ravens Bluff. They are cordial to the PCs, but they have only just arrived and are tired. They are sympathetic to the party's cause, but they need to leave in two days and cannot help them.

The inn staff includes Jack and Jill Loon, a middle-aged couple who like to meet people, even non-humans. Jack cooks, and Jill is the bar maid. Buril, the owner, is very distrustful of non-humans, especially halflings. He refuses to allow halflings inside unless he receives a 100 gp deposit, returnable upon departure.

Buril is be very closed-lipped around the party. Jack and Jill, however, will find time to chat with the PCs. If asked about any other travelers in the past few days, they mention Bron, who impressed Jill (which still makes Jack jealous), and Mok Rake, who impressed Jack with his fighting stories. They were supposedly just passing through this area. The pair were heading north to Ravens Bluff with several companions in tow, but they changed their plans after talking with one of the local watch members.

The Loons are not sure which watchman it was; they think it was Lancaster, the leader, who is a big, brooding man and new to Manglo. They are not sure of Lancaster's last name, but the know it's something with an "S," either Shalm or Sholm. The village elder, Norgul, just hired him. After Bron and Mok Rake talked with the watch, something was exchanged between them, and the spell caster with Bron mentioned something about restudying his spells for the woods before retiring for the night. Nothing else happened and the party left early the next morning.

After the PCs talk with Jack and Jill, one of the peasants a little too abruptly gets up and heads out. If questioned, he appears nervous, but says it is getting late and he needs to get back to his mistress. He skulks his way to the gatehouse (location 11), and informs the watch of what has transpired.

10. Wooden bridge: There are four canoes tied up here. Everyone knows that they belong to the Miller's and would not dare touch them. The canoes are secured with a chain and padlock.

11. Gatehouse: This building has a single room in front and two cells in back. There are six watchmen: Eric, Dan, Jarm, Roak, Mandriff, and Lancaster, their captain.

Watchmen (6): Int Average; AL N; AC 4; MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2-8+2; SA three attacks every two rounds with broad sword at +1 "to hit," +2 damage from specialization; SZ M; ML 15; XP 120 each.

Lancaster: Int High; AL N; AC −1; MV 9; HD 7 (F7); hp 49; THAC0 14; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8+7; SA two attacks a round with morning star at +4 "to hit," +7 damage from magic, specialization, and Str 18/42; SZ M; ML 16; XP 975.

Magic Items: *Shield +1, morning star +2, potion of hill giant strength, rod of rulership* (5 charges).

When the party first arrives, Lancaster is not around. The other watchmen say Lancaster is new to this area and recently hired by Norgul.

Mandrif was with Lancaster when he talked with Bron and Mok Rake. However, Mandrif will not say what happened in front of the other watchmen, and he wants at least 50 gp for his information. After he is paid he will relate that Lancaster hired Bron and his group to go recover some silver. The details were on a scroll Lancaster passed to the group. Mandrif doesn't know what was on the scroll.

Railroaded

After the party has explored for the day, Lancaster confronts the PCs. The rest of the watch is present to back him up.

Lancaster charges the party with malicious conduct and subversive behavior. A crowd of peasants begins to gather. If the party does not go quietly, Lancaster uses his *rod of rulership* on the party. Any PC affected by the *rod* will immediately comply with Lancaster's orders to surrender. Lancaster deals with unaffected PCs by threatening harm to his prisoners. If the party is being difficult to capture, Tal Ric appears and tries to persuade the party to give up. If the PCs still refuse to surrender, the watchmen attack to subdue.

Angry peasants (75): Int Low; AL N; AC 10; MV 12; HD 1; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 2; Dmg overbear, wrestle; SA make overbearing attacks in groups of six for a "to hit" bonus of +5; SZ M; ML 9; XP 15 each.

Once subdued, the party is escorted to the gatehouse, and all of their items are confiscated and stored away. Everything—including material components—is taken. Spell-casting PCs are manacled.

Lancaster searches the PCs' belongings; if the PCs have not hidden the silver sliver, he finds it. Lancaster sends it to his boss, Jalena Lavender. Lancaster also wants to find out what the party knows and what has happened to The Collectors. Late at night, or if the party is about to break out, Tal Ric appears outside their jail cell:

> "Don't worry. I don't think you'll come to harm. It is amazing the ignorance of these humans. When they return in the morning, you need to show them you are not ogres. Offer to do them a favor. That should appease them."

Next morning Norgul tells the watch to bring the party to the village hall. The hall is full of villagers. Lawrence and William Lancaster also are present, sitting right up front with Lancaster and Norgul. Tal Ric is at the back. Norgul opens the proceedings:

> The village elder clears his throat and motions for silence. When the room is quiet, he addresses you. "Lancaster has accused you of many crimes, not the least of which is the murder of Bill and Sally's sons. While you specifically might not be guilty, you will answer for crimes of your elvish friends—we know they sent you here. Do you have anything to say in your defense?"

If the party offers to do a favor, as Tal suggested, the villagers suggest clearing out the evil force that seems to dominate the woods—that force caused one of the villagers, Randal, to disappear last night. They want the PCs to bring Randal back. Everyone is very happy with that idea, as either the problem will be cleared up or the party will be killed.

If the PCs agree to the task, all of their items will be returned, excluding the silver sliver. If they ask for its return, Lancaster and the watch pretend to know nothing about it. In any case, the villagers brook no delays—they want the PCs to leave now. They point the way east:

> "You should stay on the trail until you reach the shattered dogwood tree. Be careful, all the villagers avoid the place, which is full of evil spirits."

If the PCs proceed to the dogwood, they find the pit from the kech encounter. It has been concealed once again. As the PCs examine the area, they hear a cry for help, a man's voice from off the trail to the right.

The kech have laid several new traps, and they hope to lead the PCs through all of them. They take the captive Randal and drag him through the forest, letting him yell for help all the time.

For every turn that the party is out searching, roll a 1d6 and add +1 for every turn previously spend searching. The result corresponds to an encounter:

1-3 Cry for help in a different direction.

4-6 Pit 10′ × 10′ × 10′. Characters who fall in suffer 1d6 points of damage.

7-8 Deadfall of logs cover an area 10′ wide and 30′ long, victims take 2d6 points of damage, save vs. petrification for half. Characters in this area catch glimpses of leafy-green shapes among the trees.

9+ Kech attack by jumping down onto the party.

Characters with tracking or find traps ability can detect and avoid the traps by making a roll vs. one half their normal success chance.

Kech (3): Int Average; AL NE; AC 4; MV 15, Cl 6; HD 5; hp 33, 30, 29; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-6; SA −5 to opponents surprise rolls; SD Traps; SZ M (6′ tall); ML 12; XP 650 each.

If the PCs did not kill the three kech from the earlier encounter, they will be here, too.

After the kech are defeated, the cries for help continue. After one turn of searching—and one more deadfall trap, the party finds Randal tied up and looking nervous. In the small encampment the party can find: 10 pp, 280 gp, 5 ep, a *scroll of protection from gasses,* a *ring of truth,* and a *chime of hunger.*

Once they find Randal, the party can now return to Manglo in triumph. The villagers are delighted. There will be a feast in the village hall.

Ask the characters if they are feasting, if not, the villagers are deeply offended. If they do feast, Lancaster has arranged to slip a knockout drug into the party's food. Every PC who eats must save vs. poison. Failure results in a −4 penalty to all combat rolls, proficiency checks, and saving throws for 2d6 hours. Drugged PCs don't know what hit them—they just feel woozy.

When the PCs leave the banquet, Lancaster drinks his *potion of hill giant strength* and attacks them. The potion increases his damage bonus to +11. Unless the PCs specifically state they are on the lookout for trouble, Lancaster ambushes them and automatically gains a free attack.

As Lancaster charges, he yells, "I don't know what you did to The Collectors, but I have sent your sliver ahead to J.L." He fights to the death.

The Root of the Problem

When PCs awake the next morning, one of the townspeople gives them a package and a note, which reads:

> "Good morning. We did not want to wake you, so we proceeded without you. We have questioned, using spells, the criminal Lancaster. He did not relate much. The most important information is that his employer, the mysterious J.L., lives to the east, just up the river. The rest of the information can be gleaned from his diary. We have left you the relevant pages. We are taking the rest of the diary. At the duke's expense, we have rented the Millers' canoes for your use. We expect a full report upon your return."
>
> Good Luck,
> Sir Lawrence, R.O.R.
> Sir William, R.O.R.

The writing in the diary does not match the writing on the scroll signed by J.L. The passages in the diary are:

> **23** Today I have come to the dump called Manglo to do your bidding.
> **20** Today I have found no one of use in this cesspool. I will check travelers.
> **13** I have still found no one suitable.
> **5** I have contacted a party led by a mage named Amezir. They seem suitable, so I have given them the scroll as the pass sign and told them to use the canoes upon their return with the bundle.
> **4** Today I have sent you Amazeir's name and that the task is being attempted.
> **2** Another party has arrived. I confiscated an item of some interest. I have sent it on to you. They seem to be interested in the Silver tree. Today I will face this new party. Make note to send to J.L. where I got the sliver.

Once they read the diary, the party should load the canoes and proceed east up the river.

Each canoe can hold two people. Characters with armor should take it off for safety, but the DM shouldn't insist on it.

Water Under the Hill

> Your journey takes you into a stretch of calm water. Ahead, you see a great hill that could take days to cross. The stream disappears into the hillside, which is sheathed in fitted stone. The water flows through a gap about four feet high. Trees reach across the river from both banks, their branches dangling above the water, and their leaves rustling gently in the breeze. One tree has a polished silver bell hanging from it.
>
> Your canoes easily can fit through the gap. The bell is fitted with a pull rope and hangs 70-80 feet from the gap.
>
> This is a very pleasant area, and not just because of the water and trees. Brightly colored flowers grow in profusion all around.

Pause for a moment to let the PCs take this in.

> While you study the scene, you detect a rustling in the bushes—it's an eavesdropper. Tal Ric, the merchant, slowly rises from his hiding place. He looks you in the eye, then stands a little taller. "I am *Inspector* Tal Ric of the elven forest guard. I have been assigned to find out who was violating the treaty line. While I cannot bring this J.L. to justice, I can return with his or her description and full name. I will wait here for two days for you to return with the information. Someone should at least return with J.L.'s location. Maybe you can get into the hill and beyond. I sure couldn't."

Tal doesn't have much information for the PCs. He couldn't find another entrance into the hill, and he is no swimmer. He is convinced, however, that this is where "J.L." can be found. Now that the PCs have arrived, he expects them to investigate the interior of the hill.

If the PCs look over the flowers, they note the following varieties, in order of their numbers: daisies, violets, tulips, roses, and lilies. The flowers are domesticated, not wild, and have been planted in a very orderly fashion.

A druid or character with the agriculture proficiency can tell that the flowers have been very carefully tended. Many of the plants have been cut just below the blossom, leaving almost the whole stem intact. A *speak with plants* spell reveals that the inhabitants of the hill cut the flowers and wear them on their clothes.

Jalena's Lair

If the PCs enter the gap in the wall, they soon come to the metal portcullis that blocks the entrance to area B.

Residents get inside by ringing the bell. This alerts the guards in area A, who lower a concealed ladder leading to area A or raise the portcullis leading to area B. If the PCs ring the bell, they'll have to bluff their way past the guards. The guards are expecting The Collectors, so this could work.

The party also might get into areas A, B, or C by using *passwall* or *stone shape* on the wall, which is eight feet thick.

High atop the hill, there is a secret entrance leading to area R. The PCs have the normal chance to locate this entrance if they spend at least two hours searching. Tal Ric will assist them.

The PCs also can force the portcullis using a bend bars/lift gates roll. The guards won't immediately notice if the PCs bend the bars, but there is no way the PCs can get their canoes though the opening, though the PCs could swim into area B.

Lifting the gate is nearly impossible, since the canoes do not provide much stability. A character with the seamanship or boating proficiency must be on hand to steady the canoe, and must make a successful proficiency check at half the normal score or the canoe will swamp while the PCs try to lift the gate. If the canoe is held steady, the bend/bars lift gates roll still must succeed. Only one character per canoe can try to lift the gate.

The PCs can make a combined attempt, but a seaman must be on hand to steady each canoe. The portcullis goes all the way to the river bottom, 20 feet below. A swimming character cannot lift the gate, but a character could stand on the bottom and lift. This would require all the PCs to swim under the portcullis. The water is very cold here, and prolonged exposure can be harmful (see area E).

Finally, the PCs could locate the concealed ladder leading to area A. A normal search for secret doors on the cavern ceiling might locate it; Tal Ric will not help the PCs do this. There is no way to drop the ladder from the outside, except by a *knock* spell. However, if the PCs try to force this portal, the guards in area A will oblige them by dropping the ladder (see below).

Lower Level

A. Entrance Room: At water level, a metal portcullis to the northeast blocks the river, as described above. A folded walkway with spikes disguised to look like stalagmites forms a secret door. If slammed down, it would destroy any canoes underneath and cause 4d6 points of damage to creatures in the canoes.

Four guards always are on duty here. They have been told to expect The Collectors, who bear Jalena's scroll. If the PCs present the scroll signed "J.L." the guards are easily duped into believing that the party is The Collectors.

Each guard wears a daisy, and if the party bluffs their way through, the guards give each PC a daisy to wear. The guards lift the portcullis with a winch, and the PCs can beach their canoes in area B. Then two guards escorts the PCs to meet Gertrude.

If a fight breaks out, three guards attack while the fourth runs to alert the complex.

Guards (4): Int Average; AL N; AC 4; MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg 2-8+2 or 1-8 (sheaf arrow); SA three attacks every two rounds with broad sword at +1 "to hit," +2 damage from specialization; SZ M; ML 15; XP 120 each.

B. Cave: This area contains a few beached canoes, the portcullis winch, and a large raft.

If the PCs bypass area A and enter through the portcullis, the guards will notice them if the PCs are talking. Otherwise, the PCs can sneak right into the complex.

C. Storage Rooms: Rooms 1, 2, and 3 contain crates of food stuffs and beverages. Room 4 holds fertilizer, and room 5 contains gardening tools and seeds.

D. Myconid Colony: A circle of Myconids live here under Jalena's protection. Burlap curtains close off both ends of their domain.

When Jalena comes to meet the myconids she brings a pail of sweet-smelling compost which the myconids regard very highly (some of this is stored in area C4). The myconid king appears to accept the compost, and rapport spores are used to establish communication.

The myconids and Jalena are working on several joint projects. The myconids panic if anyone not bringing compost enters the area; they release their distress spores, but do not attack so long as the party sticks to the clear trail. If the party strays, or tries to enter the king's chamber in the northeast, the myconids use their pacifier and hallucinator spores.

The side chambers are filled with all sorts of fungus, including most of the myconids. The king's chamber has four long troughs filled with multi-colored fungi. They smell very sweet. There are also two workbenches crammed with agricultural equipment and lab fluids.

The king and Jalena do a brisk trade: fungi and magical fluids for the compost. A large clump of fungus at the west side of the king's chamber contains a stock of potions, all the results of the king's latest experiments: *rainbow hues, growth, sweet water, plant control,* and a *philter of love.*

Myconids (25): Int Average; AL LN; AC 10; MV 9; HD varies; hp varies; THAC0 varies; #AT 1; Dmg varies; SA spores; SZ S to L (2′ per hit die); ML 12; XP varies.

1 HD (4); hp 4 each; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-4; SA distress spores; XP 15 each.

2 HD (4); hp 9 each; THAC0 19; Dmg 2-8; SA distress and reproducer spores; XP 35 each.

3 HD (4); hp 16 each; THAC0 17; Dmg 3-12; SA distress, reproducer, and rapport spores; XP 65 each.

4 HD (4); hp 20 each; THAC0 17; Dmg 4-16; SA distress, reproducer, rapport, and pacifier spores; XP 175 each.

5 HD (4); hp 25 each; THAC0 15; Dmg 5-20; SA distress, reproducer, rapport, pacifier spores, and hallucinator spores; XP 270 each.

King, 6 HD; hp 31; THAC0 15; Dmg 6-24; SA distress, reproducer, rapport, pacifier, hallucinator, and animator spores; XP 650.

Effects of Spores: Characters struck by pacifier spores must save vs. poison or take no actions for a one round for each of the myconid's hit dice.

Those struck by hallucinator spores must save vs. poison or suffer one of these effects (1d20): 1-10, cower whimpering; 11-15, stare into space; 16-18 flee; 19-20 attempt to kill closest being. The effects last one turn for each of the myconid's hit dice.

Distress spores alert other myconids to danger.

Rapport spores establish telepathic communication between the myconid and another creature. A save vs. poison negates their effects. If the PCs present the myconids with some choice compost and are effected by the spores (creatures can voluntarily fail their saving throws), they might be able to trade for some of or all of the King's potions.

Animator spores are used to turn slain opponents into zombie-like creatures. If the PCs flee from the area and leave fallen PCs behind, the myconid king uses these spores. Infected PCs become one hit-die zombies under the king's control in 1d4 days. Such zombies rot after 1d4+1 weeks.

E. Pit Trap: This 10-foot square area dumps its victims into the rushing river below. If the PCs locate this trap, they can use a hidden lever to lock it shut. Otherwise, the first characters who step into the area must make Dexterity checks at a −2 penalty. Failure results in a 15-foot drop into the river for 1d3 points of damage. Once in the river, a victim must make a Strength check to avoid being swept down the river to area B. Non-swimmers who are swept away sink and must hold their breaths until rescued. Swimmers must make successful proficiency checks or sink also. In addition, the water is cold. The victim immediately begins feeling numb and after four rounds the character must make a Constitution check each round or lose consciousness.

F. Daisy Entrance: Two displacer beasts guard this area. Bands of small, but sharp, spikes at the narrow ends of the chamber keep the beasts in. Characters without heavy footgear take 1d3 points of damage when crossing the spikes. The party must be actively scanning the floor to detect the spikes.

The beasts sniff everyone who enters. They attack anyone not wearing a flower.

Displacer Beasts (2): Int Semi; AL N; AC 4; MV 15; HD 6; hp 27 each; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/2-8; SD opponent's first attack misses, −2 on opponents' attack rolls; SZ L 8′-12′ long); ML 13; XP 975 each.

G. Guest Desk: Gertrude, a scribe, is busily at work here; she wears a violet. If the alarm is raised, she runs up the stairs in area K and hides in area M, warning the guards there. She is a non combatant (level 0, AC 10, hp 2).

If the PCs arrive with an escort, the guard flirts with Gertrude briefly and then tells the party to rest, as he will inform J. of the party's presence. Ger-

trude tells the party to wait in their rooms until summoned. The party is assigned rooms H1 and H2. There is a lot of paperwork on her desk pertaining to food consumption for a force of approximately 20 individuals.

If the PCs arrive here on their own, Gertrude is suspicious and frightened, even if the PCs are wearing flowers. She directs the PCs into area H, hoping to make a dash to area V. If attacked or threatened, she gives up without a struggle.

H. Guest Rooms: The doorways to these rooms are curtained. The furnishings are decent, but nothing spectacular. Only room 3 is occupied. A trader, Lacorch, a half orc wearing a daisy, is waiting here after dropping off his goods (food for the complex), which he brought by raft. He arrived from Manglo three days ago, and he is getting a little testy. He wants his money. He does know Jalena by name, but does know that she loves flowers and perfume.

Lacorch: Int High; AL N; AC 4; MV 12; HD 8 (T8); hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8+2; SA backstab for +4 attack bonus and 3× damage; SZ M; ML 16; XP 975.

Magic Items: *long sword +2, potion of invisibility, cloak of protection +1, ring of sustenance.*

I. Lower Dining Hall: This area is filled with plain wooden benches and long tables. The kitchen (I1) is separated from the dining area by a wooden partition. If the alarm has not been raised, three cooks, Mica, Sena, and Mersh are here preparing a meal. They will not fight (level 0, AC 10, 3 hp each). All wear violets. If questioned, they say the complex has about a dozen guards, and that the owlbears in area L can be bypassed through area K. The store room (I2) holds assorted foodstuffs. The cold storage area (I3) holds meats.

J. Owlbears' Nest: The west side of this chamber is filled with a big, untidy nest. It smells very bad, and is littered with dung and feathers.

K. Extra Exit: This staircase is not used much because of the smell from the nest. A stone guardian has been placed here to prevent anyone without a violet from going upstairs. Any prisoner the PCs bring here (most likely Gertrude or one of the cooks) tries to escape up the stairs when the stone guardian attacks.

Stone Guardian: Int Non; AL N; AC 2; MV 10; HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2-9/2-9; SA *detects invisibility* continuously; SZ M (6′ tall); ML 20; XP 1,400.

A stone guardian takes quarter damage from edged weapons, is immune to normal missiles, and takes half damage from fire, electricity, and cold. It is immune to a mind-affecting spells and mental attacks, fear, paralyzation, and poison. A *stone to flesh, transmute rock to mud, stone shape,* or *dig* spell kills it with no saving throw.

L. Owlbear Post: A mated pair of owlbears trained to attack anyone without a violet are on guard here. They are also trained to not walk over the purple lines painted on the floor unless they are leashed. There are two leashes on the wall; both owlbears have collars studded with amethysts (worth 150 gp each).

Owlbears (2): Int Low; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 5+2; hp 28 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-12; SA Hug; SZ L; ML 12; XP 420 each.

Upper Level

All the ceilings on this level are covered with glowing lichen. This level is much cleaner that the lower level and is pleasantly scented.

M. Rest Area: This room is for relaxing. The place is crammed with plants that give off a calming fragrance. Characters must save vs. spell each round or become passive and unable to do anything violent or destructive. This effect lasts until the character can breathe fresh air (just getting out of the room is sufficient) for 3d4 rounds.

There are also lots of large comfortable chairs, a chess board, and some books. If there have been no alarms, two guards from area U are here relaxing.

N. Armory: There are racks of long swords, long bows, and quivers of arrows here. Two practice targets stand at the room's south end. There is also a pile of worn and broken weapons in the northwest corner, which contains the head of a *battle axe* +2. If attached to a new handle it would be useable. If the alarm has sounded, one of the sergeants from area V waits here, hoping to attack intruders while they are affected by the fragrance in area M. If a fight breaks out, three guards from area P join the fray.

O. Ivy Hallway: Ivy covers the walls. The plants give off a nice smell which permeates the whole level. A side room (O1) contains a privy with a large chamber pot and lots of nice smelling plants.

P. Central Chamber: This area is filled with colorful, fragrant tulips growing in flower boxes. There is a large glass atomizer (one pint) filled with tulip scent under one flower box.

If there has been an alarm, four guards from area U are waiting here. They have been gambling in area R and have 135 gp between them. If they hear fighting in area N, three attack while the fourth runs to get the reserve guards in area U.

Q. Hound: Jalena has placed a *Mordenkainen's faithful hound* here. It attacks any creature that doesn't smell of flowers. (Characters who use the atomizer in area P smell of flowers.)

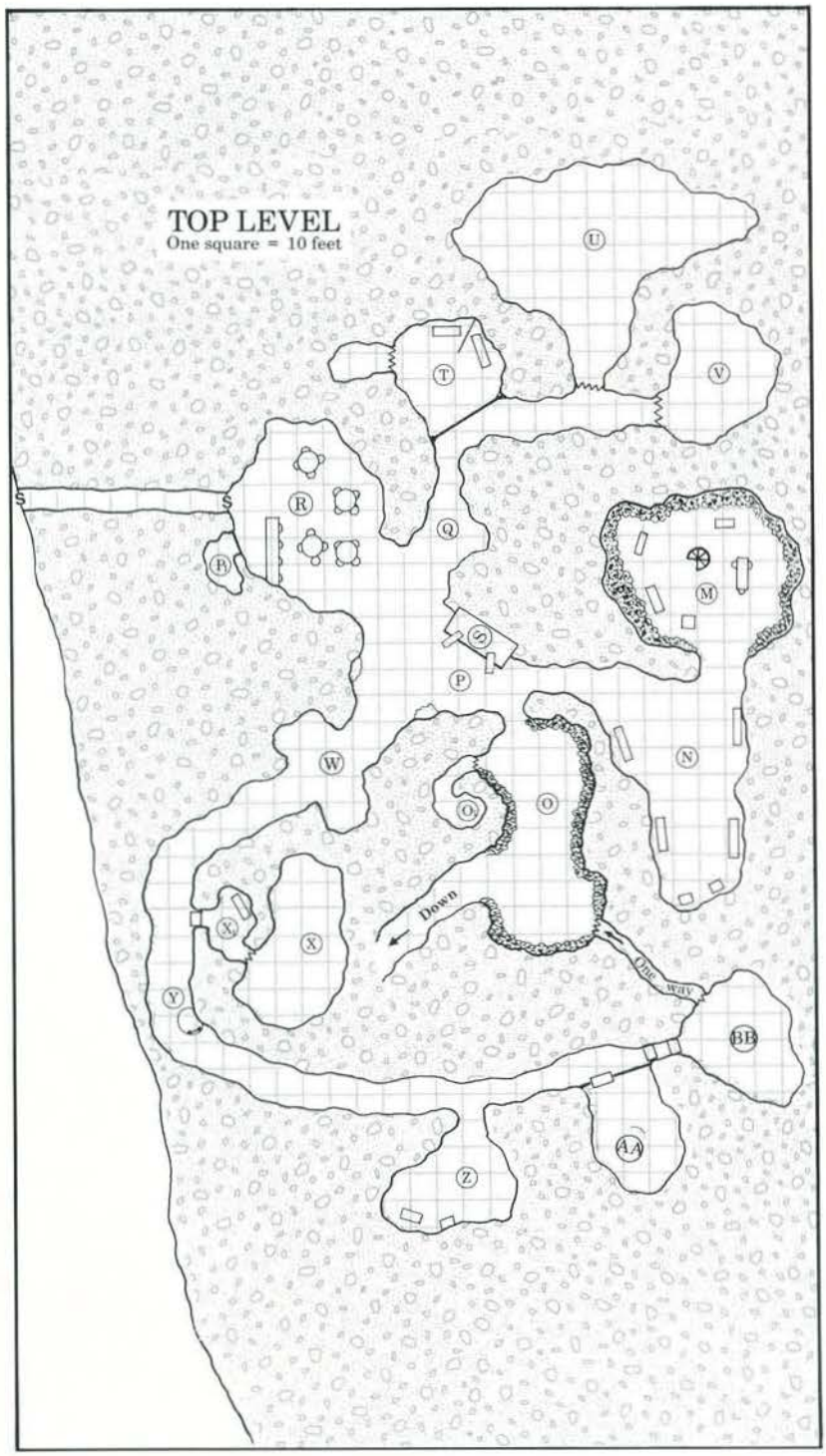
R. Lounge: This area has a small bar and several round tables. A thief, Michecal, is running continuous card games. The current game has been going on for three weeks, with players drifting in and out. If there has been an alarm, only four people are playing, otherwise there are seven. There also is a bartender, Barhlame, and a serving maid, Lisha (both level 0, AC 10, hp 3). The store room (R1) holds a stock of liquor.

Card players (3 or 6): Int Average; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3 (F3); hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M; ML 12; XP 65 each.

Michecal: Int High; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 5 (T5); hp 17; THAC0 18; Dmg 1-8; SA backstab for +4 attack bonus and 3× damage; SZ M; ML 10; XP 420.

If fighting breaks out, Michecal grabs the pot, while the other players attack the PCs. He dives under the table, tries to hide in shadows (40%), then tries to sneak out the secret door. The pot contains 174 gp, 30 ep, 5 pp, and silver belt buckle (57 gp).

S. Sky Light: This enchanted item is bolted into the ceiling. For 12 hours a day, it floods area P with sunlight and shows a clear blue sky in its glass



panes. For the remaining 12 hours it emits bright moonlight and shows a starry sky, but it has no real connection to the outside.

A little pool, three feet deep and lined with benches, lies under the skylight. Six goldfish with purple stripes swim in the pool. They are intelligent and long for the wilder life of a river.

If there have been no alarms, Perfume, Jalena's weasel familiar, is eyeing the pool when the PCs enter area P. He hides behind a bench and waits until the PCs leave before going to warn Jalena. If the PCs stop to watch the fish, Perfume bolts into area O. He has a 30-foot head start on the PCs, and if he is not killed or captured in one round he disappears into the ivy. Once there he is out of sight, and the PCs cannot harm him except with area effect spells. A *detect invisibility* spell reveals his location, but does not deprive him of cover. If pursued or attacked, Perfume empathically warns Jalena.

Perfume: Int Low; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 1; hp 17; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA Blood drain; SZ T; ML 10; XP 15.

T. Dressing Room: Benches line the walls here. There are several basins of clean water, and a privy hidden behind a curtain. There are also racks holding leather armor, chain mail, shields, and long swords. If the alarm has sounded, the racks are empty.

U. Barracks: Here are bunks for 30 people. If there has been no alarm, seven guards are resting. They surrender if confronted. If there has been an alarm, five guards wait here as a reserve and four take up posts in area P.

Guards (9): Int Average; AL N; AC 4; MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg 2-8+2 or 1-8 (sheaf arrows); SA three attacks every two rounds with broad sword at +1 "to hit," +2 damage from specialization; SZ M; ML 15; XP 120 each.

V. Sergeants' Room: The door to this room is locked. Inside, there are two beds, a desk, two dressers, and a rose bush growing in the northwest corner. One dresser has a silver mirror (worth 22 gp). The bottom drawer in the same dresser has a secret panel containing a wooden box. The box is locked and trapped with a needle tipped with type B poison. There are two bags inside the box; the first holds 75 gp, 15 pp, and a *potion of polymorph self.* The second has a bloodstone (47 gp), a chunk of amber (180 gp), a topaz (480 gp), and a flawed ruby (100 gp).

Normally, the sergeants alternately patrol areas N to T, with one sergeant remaining in area V all the time. If there is no alarm, the PCs might encounter a sergeant in any of these areas. The sergeants know the PCs aren't supposed to be here, and will raise the alarm if they can. Each sergeant wears a rose.

When the alarm sounds, one sergeant goes to area N and the other joins the captain in area Z.

Lacam: Int High; AL N; AC 1; MV 9; HD 6 (F6); hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg 2-8+2 or 1-8 (sheaf arrow); SA three attacks every two rounds with broad sword at +1 "to hit," +2 damage from specialization; SZ M; ML 15; XP 420.

Magic Item: *ring of shocking grasp* (fitted with a wire to transfer the current to the sword's blade).

Karnar: Int High; AL N; AC 0; MV 12; HD 6 (F6); hp 40; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2 or two; Dmg 2-8+2 or 1-8 (sheaf arrow; SA three attacks every two rounds with broad sword at +1 "to hit," +2 damage from specialization; SZ M; ML 15; XP 420.

Magic Items: *elven chain mail +2, 5 sheaf arrows +1, quiver of Elhonia.*

W. Guard Post: A charmed minotaur waits in each alcove. They have orders to attack anyone who is not wearing a rose. They are both a little dense and cannot remember what a rose looks like. They attack anyone not wearing a flower.

Minotaurs (2): Int Low; AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 6+3; hp 30, 35; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-10 (halberd); SA Grapple, charge; SD +2 bonus on surprise roll; SZ L; ML 13; XP 1,400 each.

X. Druids' Rooms: The door to this chamber is iron bound and locked. It has an Iris blossom painted on it.

The two druids living here provide spiritual guidance, help with the plants, and serve as physicians.

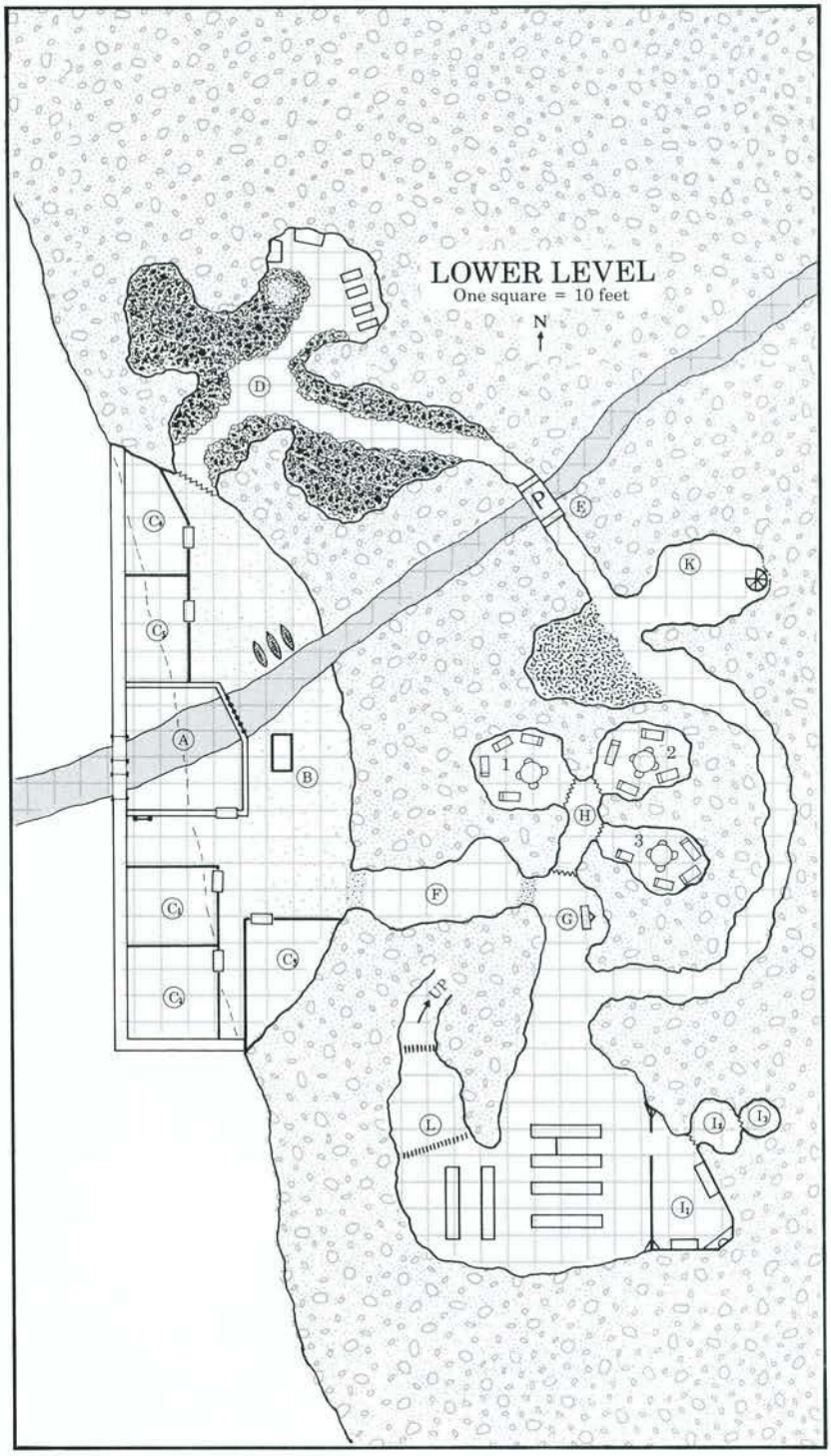
The outer room (X1) is filled with potted plants (an *entangle* spell would work in here). The only furnishings are a couch with thin cushions and a forest green curtain covering the east wall and hiding the entrance to the main chamber. The curtain has an iris stitched onto it.

Sheesha, a former warrior and now a druidical acolyte is here practicing a chant, part of her training. She is very pretty (Ch 17). If she hears the PCs fiddling with the door, she throws it open and asks what the party wants. No matter what they say, she says the head druid is much too busy to see them.

Bilik, the head druid, lives in the main room. He is a balding, middle-aged man wearing a kilt and a conical hat. He will defend his sanctuary if necessary, but he is not prone to violence.

If he hears conversation or fighting in Sheesha's room, he and his pet tiger investigate. If the party explains their presence, Bilik listens. He is appalled to learn about Silverwood's peril and directs the PCs to area AA to confront Jalena. He is not quite ready to attack her, much to Sheesha's relief. If the party thinks to ask, Bilik uses some of his healing spells on the PCs.

Bilik keeps no treasure in his room, but a box under Sheesha's bed holds 47 pp and the silver sliver. It is protected with a *fire trap* (1d4+4). Both druids wear roses.



Sheesha: Int High; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 4 (F3/D4); hp 29; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8+1; SA spells; SD +3 to saves vs. mental attacks from Wisdom 17; SZ M; ML 15; XP 270.

Magic Items: *scimitar +1, potion of animal control, potion of invisibility,* five *good berries.*

Spells Carried: *cure light wounds* (×2), *faerie fire, entangle, detect magic, heat metal, charm person or mammal* (×2), *speak with animals.*

Bilik: Int High; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 9 (D9); hp 44; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA spells; SD +4 to saves vs. mental attacks from Wisdom 18, shape changing; SZ M; ML 15; XP 3,000.

Magic Items: *cloak of protection +3, broach of shielding* (43 charges) Staff of Woodlands +3 (21 charges) seven *good berries.*

Spells Carried: *cure light wounds* (×3), *faerie fire, entangle, detect magic, create water, heat metal, chill metal, charm person or mammal* (×2), *speak*

with animals, obscurement, summon insects (×2), *spike growth, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison, plant door, animal growth.*

Tiger: Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 34; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-10; SA Rear claws 2-8 each; SD +2 surprise; SZ L; ML 10; XP 650.

Y. Trap Door: This portal is protected by a *fire trap* (1d4+14). It leads to an emergency exit with a rope ladder.

Z. Captain of the Guard: This room has a bed, dresser, and racks for armor and weapons.

Zhakal, the captain, always wears a rose. He is a middle-aged man who is here to get paid for doing his job. He is starting to feel the effects of age and wears spectacles with golden rims (1,153 gp).

Unless there is an alarm, the captain keeps his weapons and armor on the racks. Zhakal also has a book case stuffed with romance novels. On his dresser, Zhakal keeps a picture of a silver-haired lady; it has a silver frame (470 gp) and is labeled "MOM." A large pillow in Zhakal's bed hides a pouch which contains a gold medal studded with gems (417 gp), 175 pp, an opal (1,571 gp), a jade bracelet (2,700 gp), and a ruby (7,304 gp).

If there is an alarm, Zhakal dons his armor and weapons, warns Jalena in area BB, then goes to check the preparations in areas N-V, probably with one of the sergeants in tow (see area V). Once his check is complete, Zhakal and the sergeant either join the guards in area P or stand guard between the two doors leading into area BB (equal chance for each).

Captain Zhakal: Int High; AL N; AC 5 (−5 in armor); MV 24; HD 11 (F11); hp 78; THAC0 10; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8+5; SA +4 "to hit," +5 damage from specialization and magic weapon; SZ M; ML 15; XP 5,000.

Magic Items: *boots of speed, long sword +3 frost brand, potion of fire breath, eyes of minute seeing, plate armor +1, shield +2, morning star +2, long bow +1, 20 arrows +1.*

AA. Laboratory: This chamber's natural mouth is almost 30 feet wide, but this has been sealed with a brick wall and a locked, iron-bound door. A very nice smell comes from the room. Inside, the smell is overwhelmingly sweet. The room is a botanical laboratory for perfume making. There are pots of plants and flowers everywhere.

A cluttered work bench holds several books on growing plants, three *potions of plant growth,* two *potions of plant control,* and a box of fertilizer. There also is a pouch of strange pollen, four pinches worth, which functions as *dust of sneezing and choking.*

BB. Jalena's Room: Both doors are iron bound and locked. The room beyond smells just as sweet as the laboratory. There are fragrant plants everywhere, and the furnishings are grandiose. The largest piece is a huge four-poster bed with purple silk hangings. There is an exquisite reading table made of rosewood (517 gp), but it weighs 100 pounds. A lead-lined compartment hidden under the table holds Jalena's spellbooks. There are also lots of wall hangings. A locked door concealed behind the hangings on the north wall is trapped with a pollen blower filled with the *sneezing and choking* pollen from the laboratory.

An ivory box (175 gp) is concealed under a large rose bush (a character searching here must padded gloves or suffer 1d4 points of damage). The box holds 75 gp, 27 pp, an aquamarine (478 gp), a chunk of quartz (18 gp), a piece of amber (213 gp), and an emerald (3,750 gp).

There is a huge oak dresser with crystal bottles on top. The bottles hold perfume and are worth 50-100 gp each. A pile of perfume-impregnated scarfs, mostly deep red, lies in the southwest corner.

Jalena

Jalena is a large woman in her late 30s. She especially likes flowers and perfumes, but also is fond of money, jewelry, and power. She always wears a fresh lily. She has a *stoneskin* spell running. She also has a *contingency* which *dimension doors* her to area P if she has a spell disrupted in combat.

If the PCs manage to reach her room without raising the alarm, Jalena is wary; she knows they are intruders and cannot be bluffed. She scoffs if accused of plotting Silverwood's death—all she wants are a few branches. Of course, if she can make perfume from them she'll want the rest of Silverwood, too. Jalena will do all she can to put the PCs' minds at ease. However, she regards the characters as Silverwood's agents, and will attack to kill as soon as they let their guard down.

Jalena Lavender: Int Genius; AL CE; AC −2; MV 12; HD 14 (W14); hp 44; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4+1; SA spells; SD +2 to saves vs. mental attacks from Wisdom 16; SZ M; ML 16; XP 8,000.

Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 2, dagger +1, scarab of protection, potion of extra healing, potion of heroism, ring of chameleon power, necklace of adaptation, wand of paralyzation* (42 charges).

Spells remaining: *Grease, magic missile (× 3) detect magic, detect invisibility, invisibility, mirror image, web, wizard lock, levitate, hold person, lightning bolt, slow, dispel magic, sepia snake sigil, dimension door, stoneskin, fire shield, cone of cold, hold monster, wall of force, globe of invulnerability, Tenser's transformation, teleport without error.*

Jewelry: Platinum earrings (2,500 gp), silver leaf pendant (700 gp), 5 ivory bracelets on left arm (150 gp each), silver necklace with gems (3,200 gp), purple silk cap with golden embroidery (2,300 gp).

If forewarned by Perfume, Jalena notifies the guard captain, then uses her *ring of chameleon power* to blend in with the plants in her room. If Zhakal and a sergeant are on guard outside area BB, she appears in the inner doorway while the two warriors fight. If they are defeated, she *wizard locks* the door, then casts *Tenser's transformation* and re-emerges to attack the PCs.

If the PCs attack Perfume in area S, P, or O, Jalena casts *mirror image,* then uses the secret passage to area O and launches a spell assault. This eventually brings the guards from area R into the fray in one round, and the guards from area U two rounds later. She keeps attacking with spells as long as she can, then uses *Tenser's transformation* to finish off the PCs.

Once the party defeats Jalena and leaves the complex, the PCs receive a telepathic message from Silverwood thanking them for their efforts. Thereafter, the PCs become known to the elves in the area as "friends of Silverwood" and always are welcome and respected.

The Living Galaxy

In The National Interest: Constructing Countries On Other Worlds

by Roger E. Moore

Spacefaring characters who spend a lot of time roaming from world to world probably will become acquainted with many forms of planetary and regional governments. Usually, there's not much need for the game master of a science fiction campaign to detail the inner workings of every political body the adventurers meet. Many planetary stops across the galaxy might be quite short, only long enough to off-load cargo, take on new items, have a bar fight, and post bail before leaving.

If the GM has the time, however, and if the adventurers will be operating within a reasonably confined area of space for more than two gaming sessions, it's worth detailing local world governments and nations a bit more to add depth to the campaign. This detailing can be fairly brief, but it can also offer a variety of adventure hooks and sideline quests, both for the current adventure and for future ones.

Nations establish laws that adventurers are expected to obey, offer services that adventurers may need, require assistance that adventurers might fulfill (for a price), and build military forces that adventurers should respect if they hope to live long. Nations are also made up of people (whether human or alien), and adventurers certainly meet lots of people on their travels.

Futuristic other-world governments appear in many science fiction games and come in all forms, from massive bureaucratic world-states to fragmented ("balkanized," to use the *Traveller* game's term) political congregations where a single continent might have up to a hundred or more independent nations. Interstellar atlases from science fiction games are usually stuffed with extremely condensed descriptions of world governments, leaving it to the GM to bring them out of their blandness and into politically vibrant life.

There are a number of creative techniques that work well for generating nations. We'll take them one by one. For the most part, these techniques rely on one basic point: asking questions.

National Role Models

Suppose you are in a tournament role playing game, and you are handed a pregenerated character to play—say, a handsome and daring human smuggler, a man with an outer shell of cynicism and self-preservation but with a buried heart of gold. You can try to play the character cold, making it up as you go along, but you will find the going much easier if you adopt the role of a specific person with whom you're familiar, someone who is very much like the smuggler. Who is most like this dashing smuggler?

If you are a *Star Wars* fan and thought of Han Solo as a role model, give yourself a cookie. You know his sneer, his excuses, his courage, his egotism, his good intentions, everything. Using Han as your model makes your performance much more personal and detailed.

This same principle applies to the playing of nations by the GM, too. Suppose you have a world—we'll call it Sparta—and the only thing you know about it (thanks to the game system's atlas) is that it has a single planetary government that is repressive but highly developed technologically. That's *all* you know. How will you, as the GM, role play Sparta's customs officials, bureaucrats, shopkeepers, soldiers, criminals, and starship pilots? What is Sparta *really* like?

To get a grip on the situation, just think of a real-world model for Sparta's government. Brainstorm a short list of possibilities, then pick one. We'll skip to the chase here and suggest the old Soviet Union as Sparta's model.

Instantly, we not only have a world model but we have the nation's history, culture, and current events, too. I don't mean that Sparta was colonized by Russians; it could be colonized by bug-eyed aliens for all it matters. But think about it:

Sparta, like the Soviet Union, has a highly centralized government based in the world's largest city (First Landing) in the largest state within the world-nation, which we'll call the Spartan Republican Fusion. There is considerable cultural and ethnic diversity, but lots of these cultures would be at each other's throats if not for the powerful and repressive state military. The economy is government controlled and planned, but the world relies heavily on imports of high-tech hardware, information, and other goods.

The SRF is made up of a number of smaller states, some of which were independent nations before they were gobbled up by Sparta State (the name of the largest state in the SRF) in a series of wars in the past 100 years. The cost of holding the union together is very high; government officials have several times ordered military forces to put down uprisings or smoldering wars between hostile states, and underground independence movements (acting as terrorists) exist in a number of states. The media is state controlled from First Landing, which is also where the bulk of the world's defensive military emplacements are located.

Sparta's economy has been slipping for the past few decades, and the infrastructure of the world has been falling apart. The world can field warships in space, but cannot give its citizens enough food to last through the long winters. The military is showing grave signs of apathy and division. Politicians feud openly; the force of law is weakening. Several small and distant states are on the verge of becoming independent, but more serious divisions are showing up in the larger states as well—some of which may themselves break apart into smaller political units. The totalitarian government is fast approaching a crisis, and the world could be heading for civil war and chaos.

Not bad, eh? We could add volumes more to the above details and still not run dry (the Soviet Union has been a popular topic in Western media for a long time). Instead of the Soviet Union, we could have also selected Imperial Rome, Nazi Germany, or any of a number of other real-world models.

Almost any single nation that exists now or existed in the past on our world can serve as a model for a single world-state in a given science fiction role playing game. Obviously, some revamping of history would have to take place to make each nation fit a particular campaign planet, but the basics should

be able to shine through. Consider the examples of the following 12 nations as world-states, and imagine what you would need to do to make each model fit a world in your own interstellar campaign:

1. The former Yugoslavia (just prior to its breakup);
2. The United States of America (just prior to the Civil War);
3. Modern Canada (with Quebec seeking independence);
4. The modern Republic of South Africa;
5. Egypt (during the time of the pharaohs);
6. Modern Brazil;
7. Mexico (before its revolution);
8. Imperial Japan (early in World War II, having conquered all surrounding nations);
9. France (before its revolution);
10. Modern Iceland;
11. Feudal Japan; and
12. Vatican City.

Obviously, you will have to do some research to get a better idea of each nation's history and current situation (I don't much about Iceland, for example, beyond its link with Vikings). Note that historical models were often selected for a time period that might prove to be quite "exciting" for player characters who happen to be present.

If you are clever, you could also construct a nation based on one of the states in the U.S.A., provinces in Canada, or so on. A country set up like Alaska, Ukraine, Saskatchewan, Texas, Hawaii, Scotland, or Nova Scotia could be quite interesting. What about New York City recast as its own country?

Even sharper national models can be produced by modeling more than one nation per world on current or past nations on our world. Real-world nations that have been involved in wars and other conflicts are the best for our purposes. Think about the following examples of paired models:

1. The United States and Cuba;
2. The People's Republic of China and Taiwan;
3. The United Kingdom and Ireland;
4. North and South Korea;
5. Israel and surrounding Arab nations;
6. Iraq and Iran;
7. Nazi Germany and the U.S.S.R.;
8. India and Pakistan;
9. The United States and the Philippines;
10. France and Vietnam in the 1950s;
11. The U.S.S.R. and Afghanistan;
12. The United States and the Confederate States of America (again, this is presented just to show that you need not be limited to current events; history is a great source of new ideas).

Some of these models imply the existence of other forces. Two nations based on North and South Korea likely would be supported by two rival powers, either on- or off-world governments or corporations. A Nazi-like state might have several conquered nations in its holdings, as well as a few countries that have not yet fallen to its armies. A small but politically independent and militarily powerful nation like Cuba or Israel might be supported by an off-world power or alliance that opposes the major country present on the planet.

Tweaking the Model

Having a set of models for your nations is an excellent start, but you probably will not want to precisely copy a nation's history into your campaign. Operating on instinct alone, you will likely tweak each model so that it becomes an original creation that fits your own personal vision of your campaign setting. And this is good.

For example, let's borrow the model of China and Taiwan. You have a colonized world that once had a unified world-state called the United Provinces of St. John. It then underwent a long and bloody political revolution. The old government and many of its followers escaped to a large island off the coast of the mainland, where they have held out for more than 50 years under the same name (even though the union now constitutes but one province).

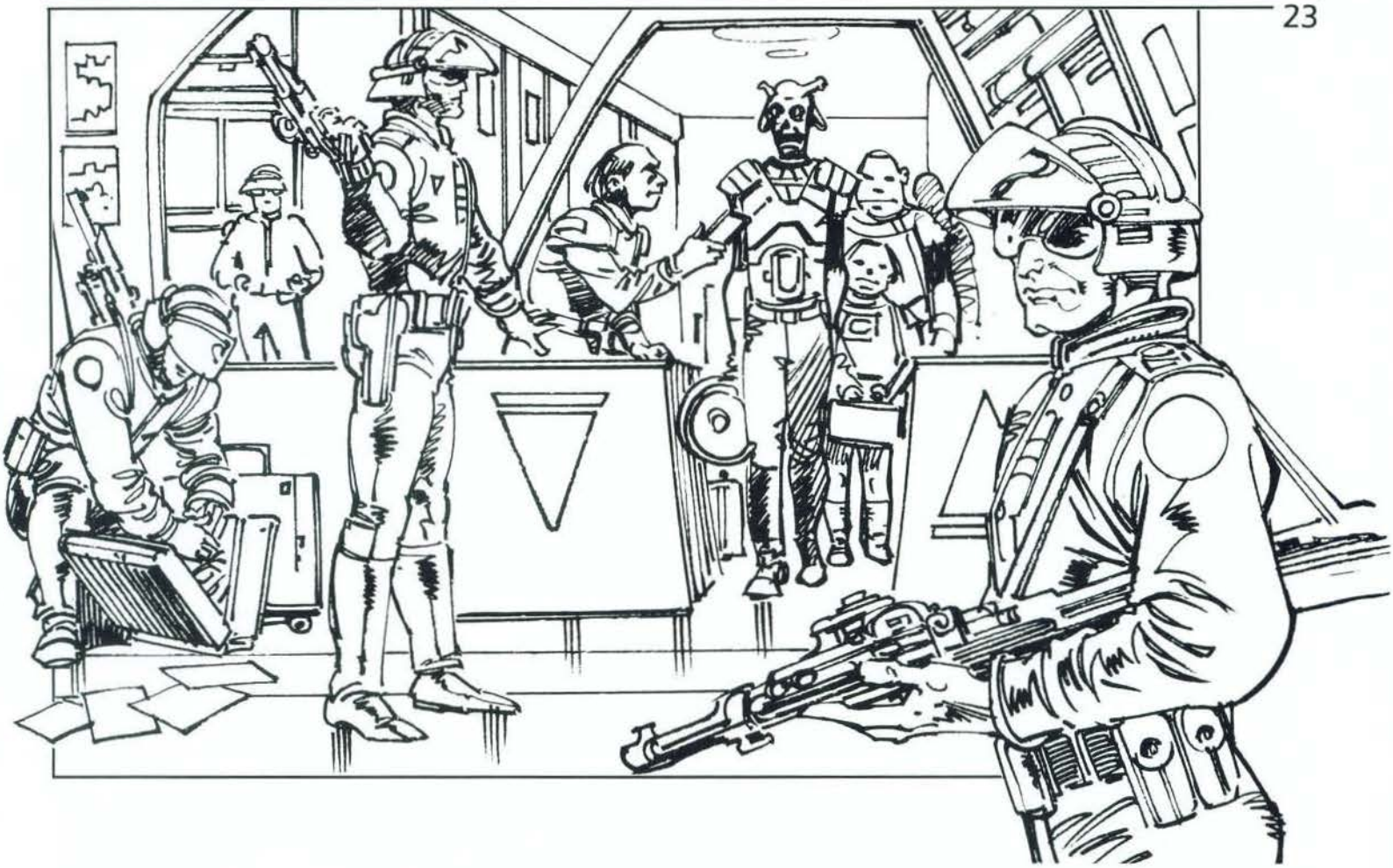
The people here consider their government the legitimate one. The mainland government, the Democratic Republic of St. John, has been unable to pursue the war but still considers the island in rebellion, and has been making plans for decades to invade and conquer it when the time seems right. Neither nation will compromise. Both nations actively and ardently seek weapons on the interstellar market, as well as technical assistance of all sorts. Both have starports. Each one considers anyone dealing with its rival to be a bitter enemy.

The original model has been tweaked a bit already, but we'll tweak it a little more. We now assume that the UPSJ is a constitutional monarchy, and the DRSJ is a parliamentary democracy bordering on a religious dictatorship; communism is not an issue. The revolution came about in part because the old government greatly restricted access by the public to the interstellar market, and tried to keep its citizens low-tech (and thus less of a threat) with too heavy a military hand.

The new government, however, has been quite liberal in its use of violence, and the revolution was costly in every way imaginable. We further add religious issues that were not present in the China-Taiwan situation, saying that the UPSJ believes in the divinity of its king, while the DRSJ is backed by a popular variant of that religion (the UPSJ calls it heresy) that makes its archcleric, not the king, divine. Clerics hold office in the DRSJ parliament; they are elected by their congregations. The DRSJ archcleric, of course, heads the parliament.

What effect will this material have on happy-go-lucky player characters who visit this world? Well, think about the usual elements of spies, terrorism, arms shipments, sabotage, rumors of war and invasion, and so on, now mixed with visits by clerics from either side who spout religious dogma in which few characters will be interested. Think about the sudden arrest of characters who act disrespectfully toward local clerics, or attempts by local clerics to convert characters to the One True Way. Think about possible temporary or permanent seizure of grounded starships by governments during political crises, or airspace violations that might lead to attempts to shoot down spacecraft. Think about ways in which one country might retaliate against any group found to be working for its enemy. Think about a worst-case scenario in which the DRSJ appears to be ready to launch a full-scale invasion of the UPSJ, and both sides are armed to the teeth with superweapons.

All this came with just a few minutes' work. Now, it's your turn. Don't bother with paper and pencil just yet. Look back over the previous lists of model nations, select one or two, and simply think about what you could do with that model in your campaign. Plan out a few adventures that could take place there. If you hit on something good, scribble it down and use it.



The Sliding Scale

The above example of "tweaking a model" was rather freestyle. Here's a slightly more organized and in-depth system:

Having selected a national model for a world in your campaign, consider specific ways in which your campaign nation is like or unlike the model. Do this along a number of different scales, so that your world is subtly altered in more ways than one. Consider the following comparisons:

Old or new: Is the campaign nation long established, with many historical sites, old traditions, cultural heirlooms, and a feeling among the people that they belong to their world? Or is the nation relatively new, still struggling to establish itself on the world and in the interstellar community? Picture what a country modeled on Indonesia would be like if it were a thousand years old, or Mexico if it were newly established.

Independent or colony: Is the nation independent of all others, able to establish its own laws and field its own armies? Or is it a colony, answering to a stronger power that controls its government, laws, etc.? India, America, Australia, Canada, and many other countries were once colonies of Great Britain. Read about what their colonial days were like, and think about what your campaign nation would be like if it were conquered or a colony. Even a freed colony could face a rocky future. Think about Hong Kong's dilemma these days, the civil wars in the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, or the crisis going on in the former French colony of Algeria.

High population or low: Does the nation have enough citizens to withstand a variety of natural or manmade disasters? A large population that is well educated and trained certainly helps make the nation's infrastructure—communications, transportation, business, education, etc.—more powerful and efficient, allowing the achievement of high technological levels and a great variety of goods and services to be achieved and maintained. Or does the nation have a low population, so that it seems more "personal" but is less able to meet specialized needs or to survive catastrophe? Play with increasing or decreasing the total population of your nation to give it a new flavor.

Mixed or alike: Is the nation's population heterogenous, made up of many races and ethnic groups and offering a wide variety of points of view on religious, governmental, and economic matters? If so, the price of variety is often ethnic division and conflict. Or is the population homogenous, so that almost everyone is of the same race and background? Here, the price of conformity and close-knit sameness is a lack of flexibility in dealing with problems, possibly with intolerance of outside viewpoints or immigrants. Adding other intelligent races in significant numbers to the population will change your campaign nation's outlook and politics.

Geographically large or small: Is the nation a vast world-state, spread across the whole planet and possibly including orbital and otherworld colonies that answer to it? Or is it very limited in size, perhaps a single city, a buried mining colony, or an island kingdom? Large size can offer enormous variety in resources and climate, with a high population potential unless the land is hostile; consider the expanses found in Russia, the United States, Canada, and mainland China. Small nations are likely to have limited budgets and populations, though the examples of Taiwan, Singapore, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the Arab oil

states should be considered. Experiment with what a country like Syria would be like if expanded to global size, or if the United States served as a model for a domed city-state.

Industrial or agricultural: Consider the differences between the United States in the early 1800s and in the late 1800s. The Industrial Revolution hit America full force, and the formerly agricultural nation became an industrial one. Agricultural worlds can easily feed themselves, but may have lower-than-usual technology. Industrial worlds can make anything they want, but may have trouble feeding themselves and may be subject to pollution and other "civilized hazards."

Aggressive or peaceful: What's the nation's policies toward other countries? Is it benign, or more like Nazi Germany or Iraq? Is it hostile toward only a few countries, or is it basically xenophobic? The real-world model you pick may require another nation with which the campaign nation is at war, but you can alter the degree of aggressiveness your country shows.

Internally stable or unstable: Canada has its Quebec, the United States had its South, and the former Yugoslavia has its Serbians, Croatians, Muslims, and so on. You can modify a model so that your Canada-like country is in the process of granting one of its major provinces independence after narrowly avoiding a civil war, or have the Yugoslavian-type nation still held together by force of arms.

"Breakaway nationalism" might not be the internal problem, however. Powerful political opposition groups can be found in modern Algeria, Cambodia, Russia, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Peru, Egypt, India, and South Africa, often using violent methods to bring themselves into power or gain world attention. At the far end of this scale, you might have a devastated Somalia clone in which anarchy, violence, and gang rule are the norm after the nation's infrastructure has been destroyed by civil war.

Centralized power or dispersed: This harkens back to the old states' rights question in the United States. Provinces might be almost autonomous, loosely allied through a weak central government, or a strong ruling body might control almost all aspects of law, economics, and trade within its lands. Note that states within a single nation may have laws at variance with one another; firearms allowed in one state might be banned in another, and there would be many ways for PCs to get themselves into hot water in no time at all.

Democratic or authoritarian: How much of a say do common people have in the government? Are some groups of people not granted citizenship or denied voting rights? A highly advanced nation might allow direct voting on national referendums by computer or telephone; a low-population world might do the same by voice votes in public buildings. How are government officials elected or selected?

Religious or church-state separated: The influence of religion should be considered in a government. Nations like Israel and Iran are strongly guided by their respective religious beliefs; the United States separates church and state to a great extent; the old Soviet Union suppressed religion.

High tech or low: Tinker with the notion of using a national model having an altered technology level, such as Great Britain of the 1880s with 21st-century machines, weapons, and vehicles. You could also take a country based on modern America and reduce its tech level to a 19th-century level, thanks to trade embargoes, disasters, or war.

Wealthy or poor: In relative terms, is your new nation rich or poor? This affects its citizens' life expectancy, material needs, education, outlook, and more. It also affects the kinds of goods PCs can buy or sell on this world. Picture the effects on a poor nation rapidly gaining wealth, as happened with some Arab oil states.

Open media or closed: How much is the media in your nation censored or controlled by the government? Can the PCs trust what they hear over their subspace radio? Disinformation—false "news" created to achieve a particular political end—might be broadcast by any sort of government at any time for its own reasons (the United States government has been guilty of this several times in the past few years alone—a sad thought, but true).

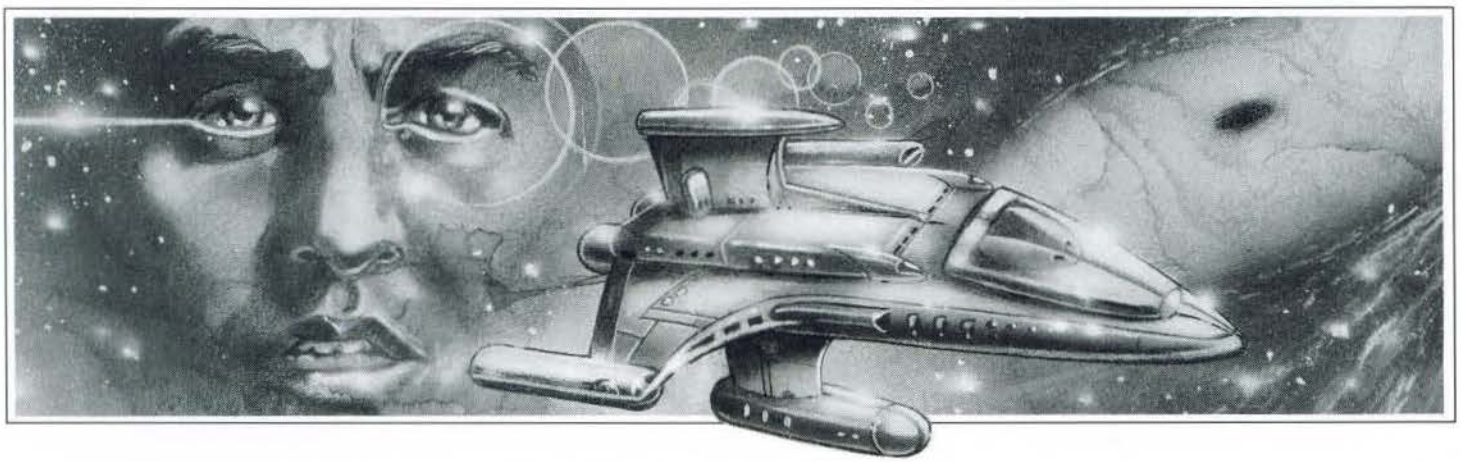
Open market or closed: Does this nation do business with off-world organizations or governments? Does it support free trade or state-controlled trade? This affects how easily PCs can get rich (or go broke) on this world. Picture a nation modeled on the United States, in which a certain degree of xenophobia and isolationism has kept it from trading with other countries. What can PCs do to break into this potentially vast market?

Expanding, shrinking, or stable: Is the nation expanding into new territory, entering permanent unions with other countries, or conquering new lands with its armies? Is it losing ground, growing smaller by disaster or war? Think about the growth of any particular major nation today, and how it grew—or shrank. Consider the effects of a policy of "manifest destiny," as it occurred in the United States in the 1800s.

The list goes on, limited only by your patience and need for detail. Does the world allow slavery? What minorities are present? How are the sexes treated? Does the government have unbalanced executive, legislative, and judicial branches? What political parties are present, if there are more than one? Is the government perpetually unstable because of factional fighting? What are some examples of "popular culture" on this world? What holidays are recognized? What's the quality of medical care? What languages are spoken, and which are official? What monetary system is used? How large is the military? What wars has the country fought? What are the major forms of transportation and communication? What are the major crimes committed there? What is the nation's flag, emblem, seal, or totem? What allies and enemies are present? Who are the most important people, and what are their plans? You might look up the compendium of modern nations in a current almanac or encyclopedia and see what characteristics are mentioned about each one, then use these yourself.

Beyond social elements, there are natural elements, too (though we will skip over them quickly here). Think about your campaign nation's climate, weather, terrain, solar conditions, ecology, wildlife, resources, and other aspects. Map the country, then mark its geographical features and climate patterns, the locations of major settlements and cities, and so on. Waterways are especially important here, not only for transportation but for urban settlement (how many cities can you think of that do *not* sit on a river, lake, or sea?). Can you model a country like Iran on a continent the size of North America, with an arctic climate and a red-dwarf sun? This is science fiction, after all, and almost anything's possible.

With these questions and "sliding scales," you can modify your national model as you like, so long as the results are relatively logical and fit the country's history.



The Lists Are Back

Having played with the "Book of Lists" notion in previous columns, we'll try it here as another nation-building technique—well, more specifically, as an adventure-building technique for that country. Pick a campaign-world nation you are detailing, then ask yourself the following questions about it:

1. What are the five most important problems this nation faces? These could include a damaged or slow economy, separatist movements, urban deterioration, a pandemic disease (e.g., AIDS, the Black Death, or the flu epidemic of 1917), organized crime, terrorism, warfare with other nations, major judicial cases, the rights of minorities or oppressed groups to vote, labor issues, elections, religious-ethnic-political conflicts, women's rights, taxes, assassinations, reconstruction from war or natural disasters, child labor, slavery, runaway corporations, etc. Take your pick, and consider ways in which these problems could be turned into adventures for your group's PCs.

2. What are five memorable and exotic tourist sites? Include wilderness parks, natural wonders, remarkable buildings, atmospheric events, bizarre cities, great social gatherings, etc. Consider ways to tie these remarkable and distinctive scenes into whatever adventures you are running.

3. What are the five most common ways for spacefaring travelers to get into trouble here? Legal problems are not the only troubles, you'll note. Gun smuggling, insulting a soldier or priest, catching a common illness, being cheated or robbed, having a particularly unpopular skin color or personal belief, improperly speaking the language, using a particularly offensive gesture or phrase, being jailed by suspicious and unfriendly police without charges—all bring trouble of one sort or another for your PCs while they head out on their missions here.

4. What are five possible adventures that could take place in this country, unrelated to anything mentioned before? Don't go into detail—just briefly outline what's available for later development, such as mercenary military work, espionage adventures, the transportation of refugees, peacemaking between rival factions, the capture of escaped criminals, hunting unusual (and dangerous) creatures, inspection of a mysterious satellite, or searching for a lost treasure, person, or craft.

5. What are five ways in which adventures could be tied into travel to other nations or worlds? This is a good way to introduce the PCs to the rest of the universe, all within the context of a longer quest.

You can make up other good questions that relate directly to the generation of adventures for your group. Force yourself to come up with more than one answer for each (five seemed like a good number to me).

Minutiae

GMs who are off and running on superdetailing various countries on other worlds can consider the following comments, for whatever they are worth:

Almost all nations of the world today are subdivided into smaller political units for ease of governing. Such divisions are often based on regional differences in terrain, climate, time of settlement, and ethnic background, as well as on wartime conquests and general governmental convenience. If you have a need to further detail a nation that the adventurers will be visiting, draw a map of the country, then mark off the separate states within it, as well as all major cities and industrial centers.

Such political subdivisions are known by many names, such as: areas, cantons, cities, colonies, commonwealths, communes, communities, councils, counties, departments, dependencies, districts, divisions, governorates, homelands, municipalities, parishes, prefectures, provinces, quarters, regions, sectors, segments, settlements, states, territories, towns, and zones. Adjectives can be applied to further distinguish the status of these subdivisions, such as corporate areas, administrative sectors, autonomous regions, metropolitan zones, and capital districts (national capitals are often governed as separate states or statelike entities, as in the U.S.A.; major cities are often governed in a similar manner).

Remember that a country's name and professed government type might have little to do with the political reality there. Nations grant themselves all sorts of descriptive names, such as: republics, commonwealths, monarchies, regimes, sultanates, unions, confederacies, and so on. They append adjectives to these names, like: federal, constitutional, democratic, independent, socialist, parliamentary, presidential, etc. However, the Free Independent Commonwealth of Akilion might be a dictatorial fascist police state, while the Eternal Monarchy of New Vanaheim might be a full democracy with a president and a congress, with a weak figurehead regent for show.

Next month—a completely new topic from somewhere in the universe. Enjoy.

Into The Dark

Night After Night

by James Lowder

Ever since George Romero carved himself a niche with the 1968 release of his first Living Dead flick, filmmakers have bombarded the world with movies sporting titles beginning with those three dreaded words: "Night of the...." It's a cliche of sorts now, rather like giving a superhero a name that starts with "Captain" or "Doctor." Maybe this will all lead to a superhero film titled *Night of the Doctors*. Nah, sounds like a soap opera. *Night of the Captains* would make a good high seas adventure flick, though.

For two columns, we'll be wandering through a dark night marathon. Be forewarned: watching most of these movies will have you shuffling around like one of Romero's living dead. Don't be surprised if the local zombie hunter plugs you between the eyes after you stumble away from the VCR.

You can't get any better	*****
Entertaining and enjoyable	****
There are worse films	***
Wait for cable	**
A waste of good tape	*

Night of the Living Dead

1968, 96 Minutes
Image Ten/Walter Reade
Director: George A. Romero
Cast: Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea, Russell Streiner, Karl Hardman
******1/2**

Few would have guessed that a Pittsburgh company specializing in industrial advertising would succeed so brilliantly in their first real foray into feature filmmaking. For a paltry $114,000, George Romero, John Russo, and their friends at Latent Image banded together to produce a horror film. The result was *Night of the Living Dead,* a movie that would soon be dubbed in more than a dozen languages and grossing millions.

The basic plot for *NotLD* is familiar to any fan of 50s and 60s low-budget monster films. A group of people, seven in this case, are thrown together in an old house. They fight to keep marauding monsters from overrunning their redoubt and personality clashes from sapping their will to survive. The characters are familiar, too—the heroic young man who leads the beleaguered band, the woman he rescues, the young lovers, the small child, and so on.

Yet for all its cliched plot elements, *NotLD* is very much unlike the monster films that sired it. Don't look for happy endings here, or for heroes who make the right choices all the time. The monsters aren't lumbering things in rubber suits, either, but terribly familiar folks who just happen to be dead—and hungry for human flesh.

Critics frequently mine *NotLD* for scholarly debate. Because the hero is black, the film is seen as an allegory for race relations. Because the helpless Barbara (Judith O'Dea) fears the zombies' clutching hands, the living dead must be a manifestation of her dread of sex. The Coopers, who are bickering and nasty, represent the disintegration of the nuclear family, and so on.

These themes may exist in the finished film, but more from fortunate accident than intent. Romero's initial script didn't call for a black man to play the lead; Duane Jones just happened to be the best actor who auditioned for the part. The film was shot in b&w for cost reasons, not because anyone at Image Ten thought the film stock would give the picture a documentary feel. Besides, *NotLD* owes its chilling realism to more than film stock—most noticeably the solid acting from Duane Jones, Karl Hardman (as the obnoxious Harry Cooper), and Russell Streiner (as Barbara's brother Johnny). Considering Hardman and Streiner were also serving as producers and filling various crew functions, this is all the more impressive.

Night of the Living Dead has sometimes been credited as the grandsire of today's gore-fest slasher films. While its success spawned hundreds of imitators—in content as well as title—most copycats were produced by folks who didn't watch the original carefully. Much of *Night*'s violence is implied or shown in shadowy sequences where the audience is invited to fill in what's going on. A neat trick, that, since the viewer will almost always imagine something far worse than the filmmaker could ever show.

Night of the Living Dead

1990, 96 Minutes
21st Century/Columbia
Director: Tom Savini
Cast: Tony Todd, Patricia Tallman, Tom Towles
****

"It doesn't take long for the world to fall apart, does it?"

Reportedly, George Romero got involved with this project to recoup some of the money he lost in copyright disputes over the original *NotLD.* His scriptwork helps to make this update shine brighter than almost anyone expected, even with gore FX wizard Tom Savini directing this time around.

The premise is the same as the original *Night of the Living Dead:* seven people trapped in a farmhouse, trying to survive an onslaught of walking corpses that want to make late-night snacks of them. The characters have been updated a little, given reasons for being near the old house when the zombies strike. The most refreshing refinement is in the character of Barbara, who was little more than a mumbling, whimpering piece of furniture in the 1968 version. Here, played expertly by Patricia Tallman, Barbara transforms during the siege into a warrior, *a la* Sigourney Weaver in *Aliens.*

While Romero's new script does away with some of the weak plotting of the 60's *NotLD,* it also goes overboard in bringing attention to the film's thematic content. The concerns alluded to in the older version are practically shouted here—Barbara's sublimated sexuality, the intentional parallel between the dead and the vicious gangs of rednecks who hunt them down at the close, and so on. The violence is pitched with more force, too. Not the outright gore, mind you, but the way the camera shows you each blow to a zombie's skull or lingers on the sharp piece of metal stuck into the dead guy's shoulder. Tallied up at the end of 96 minutes, these bits of excess noticeably weaken an otherwise fine updating of a classic.

Night of the Demons

1987, 89 Minutes
Paragon Arts/Republic
Director: Kevin Tenney
Cast: Cathy Podewell, Alvin Alexis, Linnea Quigley
****1/2**

It's Halloween, and a bunch of obnoxious teens gather at an abandoned funeral home for a party. They say the place is haunted, that evil spirits have been hanging out there since before the first settlers arrived way back when. You never know what might happen in a creepy house like that, especially if the teens decide to dabble with the supernatural and hold a seance. . . .

What am I saying? Of course you do!

With the use of a large mirror and a really stupid rite, the teens free a demon from its prison in the house. An explanation as to why the hellspawn is trapped in the basement crematorium never quite makes it into the script, but all we need to know is the nasty thing-from-beyond possesses one of the kids. From there it's slaughter-o-rama as the beast commits one grisly murder after another, taking control of each corpse as it goes along.

All the cliches are here—creaking doors, cobweb-shrouded rooms, empty caskets left over from the previous tenants. The characters are merely stereotypes, with atrocious dialogue meant entirely to explain their silly actions to the audience. As always in this type of flick, once the teens have sex—or even think about having sex—they're chow for the monster.

A few things drag the film from the depths suggested by the script. Scream queens Linnea Quigley and Mimi Kinkaide acquit themselves nicely as the two strange girls who throw the party for the otherwise insipid crowd. Kevin Tenney's direction keeps the audience from snoozing, a feat he managed before with his directing debut, *Witchboard.* However, most of the scant credit for the film's success belongs to the effects crew. The solid make-up and prosthetic work almost makes *Night of the Demons* seem like a professional production.

A sequel, currently sporting the groundbreaking title, *Night of the Demons 2,* is in the planning stages at Blue Rider Productions. Joe Augustyn, who scripted the first film, might direct the next one. I can hardly wait.

Night of the Lepus

1972, 88 Minutes
MGM
Director: William Claxton
Cast: Stuart Whitman, Janet Leigh, DeForest Kelley
***1/2**

From the studio that brought you *Gone with the Wind* and defined the movie musical with such classics as *An American in Paris* and *Singin' in the Rain* comes this towering epic about a small southwestern town cowering before a slavering, man-eating horde of giant rabbits!

Yup, big bunnies.

It's hard to believe this movie was ever made. It's even harder to believe it's based upon a book—*The Year of the Angry Rabbit* by Russell Braddon.

In their search to control a burgeoning rabbit population near some grazing land, scientists Roy and Gerry Bennet (Stuart Whitman and Janet Leigh), along with their simpering daughter, unwittingly release a lab bunny exposed to an unknown mutagen. Before they know it, the whole area is infested with rabbits as big as wolves and out for blood.

With the help of local rancher Cole Hillman (Rory Calhoun) and the president of their research university (DeForest Kelley), the Bennets battle the giants. They try a number of, uh, ingenious plans, the most dumbfounding of which involves caving in the entrances to the burrows. They forgot rabbits can dig, I guess.

Any entertainment value to be found in this dud is derived solely from its overwhelming awfulness. All the actors seem embarrassed by their lines—and well they should be. The special effects are primitive at best. When one of the big rabbits pounces on Rory Calhoun, it's obviously a guy in an unconvincing giant bunny suit. The offending rodent even throws a couple of punches (rabbit punches, that is).

I spent the whole film waiting for DeForest "Bones McCoy" Kelley to blow up at the hero: "Damn it, Jim—er, Roy—I'm a college dean not a rabbit herder!" Too bad it never happens.

Night of the Seagulls

1975, 90 Minutes
Big Apple
Director: Amando de Ossorio
Cast: Victor Petit, Maria Kosti, Sandra Mozarsky
*****

Yes, the fourth installment of Amando de Ossorio's Blind Dead quartet! I reviewed the third flick in this wretched Spanish series—*Horror of the Zombies*—way back in issue #69. This one's only slightly better.

Harry Stein (Victor Petit) moves to a coastal village in Spain, ready to set up practice as a doctor. But Doctor Stein and his young wife, Joan (Maria Kosti), are shunned by the neighbors. When strange bells ring out at midnight and the local seagull population begins to shriek, even after dark, the Steins take it upon themselves to investigate.

As often is the case with strange seaside villages, this little hamlet suffers under a terrible curse. The castle overlooking the town is the resting place of the Templarios, the terrible knights who ravaged the countryside in the thirteenth century. These unholy knights rise up every seven years, demanding the sacrifice of seven girls on each of seven consecutive nights. Naturally, the doctor and his wife have arrived just in time to witness this grim business.

The real stars of this yawner—the Blind Dead—are just what their title implies. The moldy old Templarios are slow-moving skeletons that are also, well, blind. You might think this disadvantages the baddies, but you'd be wrong.

The village is populated by such numbskulls that they can't figure out how to outmaneuver the creaky old knights. The mortals just sit around and wait for the Templarios, on horseback, to ride up the beach in slow motion (which they do a lot). Only then do they scream or tip things over or do something noisy that lets the Blind Dead know where they are.

The title, by the way, comes from the notion that the souls of those sacrificed by the Blind Dead come back as seagulls. This general waste of tape can also be found under the somewhat more chilling title *Night of the Death Cult.*

With Great Power

Constructing A "Golden" Campaign

by Dale A. Donovan

The comic books you and I read today are not spontaneously created on store shelves. No, today we are still enjoying the legacy left to us from the "Silver Age" of comics in the 1960s. It was during this time that most of the heroes you and I read about were created. The Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, the X-Men, the Avengers, the Justice League, and the current Green Lantern and Flash characters are just a small sampling of the products of that creative time.

But that generation of comic books also owes a debt; a debt to comics' "Golden Age," of the late 1930s and early 1940s. The Justice Society of America, Captain America, Namor, the original Human Torch, Sandman, Green Lantern, Superman, Batman, and Flash characters all first appeared during this era.

Again, many of the concepts that helped make the Golden Age "golden" can be traced back even to the innumerable "pulp" fiction magazines of the 1920s and 1930s. (They were called pulps because the very cheap type of paper they were printed on.) The pulps covered many genres; science fiction, espionage, horror, westerns, and swords-&-sorcery fantasy, among others.

Many authors who are today considered to be giants in their fields of literary endeavor got their starts in the pulps. Edgar Rice Burroughs, Isaac Asimov, Fritz Leiber, and many more created the heroes, the villains, the settings, and the adventures that served to inspire the creators of the comics' Golden Age, and so on down the line, to the super hero books (and super-hero RPGs) we enjoy so much today.

This column considers building a campaign directly on the foundations of the pulps and the comics' Golden Age.

Heroes

The most important aspect of any super hero campaign is the heroes themselves, particularly their powers and motivation. In the Golden Age, heroes fell into three general power categories:

The gimmick hero: Heroes of this type were normal people who donned a costume and fought crime with only their wits, fists, and a gimmick or two that made them memorable but did not give them any true "powers." Batman and Captain America are both normal humans in peak physical condition who, armed only with a utility belt and a shield respectively, clobber bad guys without the aid of any super abilities. Sometimes the gimmick isn't even a weapon. It can be as simple as the costume and name a character adopts, for example, the Wildcat is a professional boxer who puts on a dark costume with a cat's face and uses his pugilistic skills to pummel law-breakers into unconsciousness.

The super-equipped hero: These heroes also have no internalized super powers. They do possess some device or item that allows them to use superhuman powers, however. If they lose their super-goodies, they're just normal folks. Green Lantern and the original Starman both qualify for this class.

True superhumans: These are the heroes who, through mechanical, mystical, or accidental means have true powers without relying on external widgets. Unlike today, these heroes were relatively rare in the 1930s and 1940s. The pulps' Doc Savage, and comics' Spectre, the Flash, and the android Human Torch all fall into this category.

As there were only a few categories of heroes in the pulps and Golden-Age comics, they had similarly few reasons for performing their heroic acts:

Bored millionaire: This vastly wealthy person has conquered all that life has thrown at him. He's bored. He seeks excitement and adventure. He soon discovers he can find that which he craves by fighting crime. The original Sandman has this motivation.

The avenger: This hero is taking revenge on the criminal world for some wrong done to him in the past. Batman is the perfect example of such a hero.

The patriot: The patriot is a hero who sees his country in need and rises to its defense. The comics are full of such characters, the most famous being Captain America.

The cop: This hero is some sort of law-enforcement official (police officer, district attorney, etc.) who, frustrated by all the injustice she sees in her job and *legally* can't do anything about, dons a costume and goes outside the law to catch criminals. The original Guardian fits this description.

The reporter: Similar in motivation to "the cop" above, this hero is a journalist who goes after law-breakers when the authorities can't or won't. Plus, they'll probably get a good story out of it. Liberty Belle and Johnny Quick have this motivation.

The scientist or *genius:* This hero discovers or invents some magnificent device that allows him to go out and tackle the bad guys—often bad guys who want the very device the hero has uncovered. The original Starman and Hourman are two such heroes.

Caught up by circumstances: These heroes, very common in the pulps, are just normal folks who get caught up in some great, life-threatening adventure simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time. A fatally wounded spy might whisper top-secret code phrases to the hero before expiring. The hero might receive and read a misdirected letter regarding a murder mystery or a foreign plot. The hero could simply take a wrong turn and witness a heinous crime. Whatever the set-up, the villains are soon after our hero to find out just how much he knows and "silence" him before he divulges the information. Read almost any H. P. Lovecraft story for such characters.

A final element common to all Golden Age comic characters was their unfailing cheerfulness. Not only did they fully expect to win the war (not a safe bet in the early stages of World War II), they also believed that there was no problem humanity could not solve if we put our minds to it. They believed in the innate goodness of the human soul. It was this attitude that led the heroes to utter so many uplifting and patriotic (campy by today's standards) soliloquies and speeches.

A great campaign could be built around putting that hopeful, if naive, attitude to the test. It would be interesting to hear those heroes' reaction to some of the aspects of the war. Would they have approved of dropping the atomic bombs on civilian Japanese targets (the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki)? How would they have felt

about the simple existence of such weapons of mass destruction? How would the heroes have dealt with the knowledge of the Nazi concentration camps or the Japanese-internment in the United States and Canada?

Most of the heroes of the pulp and Golden Age eras were much less formidable then heroes today, and many of them also had to deal with a debilitating weakness or limitation. The original Dr. Mid-Nite of DC Comics (a gimmick hero) was blind in normal daylight without his special goggles. The original Green Lantern (a super-equipped hero), one of the most powerful heroes of the era, had a power ring whose beam had no effect on wood.

When creating heroes for this type of campaign, bear in mind that the vast majority of pulp and comic book characters would fall into the "gimmick hero" class. The character-creation process must be modified to reflect this lack of power. For the MARVEL SUPER HEROES (MSH) game, all heroes should roll on Column 3 of the Advanced Set's "Generating Primary Abilities" table when determining abilities and power ranks whether the heroes are "High-tech." Also, the heroes do not receive the special High-tech hero benefits. For super-hero RPGs where players buy their heroes' abilities with points, a lower point-total is called for (I suggest 50% to 67% of the game's normal allotment). For my Character-Point system for the MSH game (see POLYHEDRON® Newszine issues #72 and #75), I recommend 200 points for Golden Age heroes.

Villains

What use are heroes without villains for them to battle? Here are some villainous archetypes to include in a Golden Age or pulp campaign in addition to "standard" super villains—folks with super powers who use those abilities to punch out as many heroes and get as much cash as they can. The three power categories above also apply to villains, so they are not repeated here:

The mad scientist: This villain has some new invention, discovery, or formula that drives him insane. He then hopes to use his device, etc., in an effort to gain revenge on the colleagues who laughed at his earlier theories; to wipe out his enemies (be they real or paranoia induced); or simply to conquer the country, world, universe, etc. Mad scientists can fall into any of the three power categories. For those with super powers, mental abilities are very popular choices. The original Brain Wave was such a villain.

The evil genius: Similar to the scientist above, this villain has some master plan that will grant him "power over weak-minded fools." Unlike mad scientists, however, these villains are genuinely evil and are well aware of it. In fact, they seem to revel in it. They are often described by heroes as "despicable," "inscrutable," and "devilishly cunning." Many of these characters also were depicted as members of an ethnic minority (an unfortunate bit of racism). The legendary Fu Manchu and the Ultra-Humanite are two good examples.

Gangsters: Although the era of "gangbusting" was over by the 1940s, organized-crime gangs and their bosses made numerous appearances in the pulps and the comics. They tend to resent heroes cutting in on their action. Examples are easy to find in the pulps and comics, as well as from our own history. Simply move Al Capone's 1920s Chicago gang to the time and place your campaign is taking place.

Cults and secret societies: In the pulps, conspiracies and secret groups (or "illuminati") are everywhere. Whether they are cultists who worship the ancient demon-god Yeeeargh-ho (and have the nasty habit of sacrificing young people to it) or the ever-present Bundists (German-Americans who were loyal to Nazi Germany during World War II) of the comics who were constantly sabotaging a wartime facility, the heroes must determine just how deeply these villains have infiltrated American society and root them out.

Spies/Saboteurs: Like the Bundists above, these villains are up to no good in the name of a foreign power, usually an Axis power during World War II. Spies are different in that they are not Americans, generally are better equipped than local saboteurs, and are often super-powered. These villains ran rampant in many Golden Age comic books. Iron Cross, Baron Blitzkrieg, and the Red Skull are all spies or saboteurs.

Adventures

The pulps are the source of the widest variety of adventures for your campaign, so let's take a look at four of the genres that were pulp favorites:

Crimebusting/Detective: There's a mystery, usually involving a crime like murder, and it's up the heroes to piece together the clues and catch the perpetrator. Examples run from private eyes Philip Marlowe and Sam Spade to Arthur Conan Doyle's consulting detective Sherlock Holmes. The American Movie Classics cable channel shows many of the best movies depicting this era. I especially like the Humphrey Bogart films, *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Big Sleep.*

Espionage: Imagine your heroes have to infiltrate an enemy camp, base, or homeland to rescue a scientist or steal top-secret plans of the Nazis' newest terror weapon. Once they reach their objective, they still need to escape—most likely back the way they came. Some of the best examples of espionage are the novels by Ian Fleming and Robert Ludlum.

Horror: Horror stories were very popular in the pulps, and so they should be represented in any pulp or Golden Age campaign. Note the elements of horror in the film, "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" for examples of supernatural trappings. Also read the works of H.P. Lovecraft and Edgar Allen Poe.

Science fiction: Your heroes can join John Carter in his exploits on Mars. They can undertake a journey to the center of the Earth. Or they could help Buck Rogers in his battles against the alien Tigermen. Aliens are common in today's comics, so why not have some of the nastiest decide to help out the Axis powers during WWII? (Imagine the Dominators, Skrulls, Khunds, or the Brood working *with* the Axis.)

Perhaps the easiest way to come up with adventure ideas and plot hooks for a Golden Age or pulp campaign is to check out the "Sources" section below, then locate and borrow a plot idea that strikes you as appropriate and fun. Modify the story to fit your campaign (especially if you've borrowed it from a source one or more of your players are familiar with), add some twists of your own, and run with it. There are a few things every Golden Age GM needs to be aware of, and they are:

Pacing: I've talked about keeping heroes on their toes before, but in a pulp or Golden Age campaign, it's vital. Keep your game moving at a breakneck pace. A catch-phrase to remember is: "Action, action, action." Never let the players catch their breaths. Keep throwing obstacles (physical, mental, or combat) at their characters. Use the film, "Raiders of the Lost Ark," as a model on how to run a Golden Age game session.

Settings: Especially in the pulps, exot-

ic locations are a must. Bangkok, the pyramids of Egypt, the Scottish Moors, Antarctica, the wilds of Africa, these places and others all but demand to be explored by heroes. Lost civilizations are another standard locale for pulp adventures. Take your fantasy-game campaign setting and drop your pulp or Golden Age heroes smack in the middle of it. The "Lands of Mystery" supplement for Hero Games' *Justice Inc.* system is the definitive source for creating such a lost world from scratch. An excellent African campaign setting appeared in DRAGON® Magazine issue #189. Although designed for a fantasy game, it can be adapted for a pulp campaign easily enough.

Deus ex machina: This phrase, which roughly means "god from the machine," is a term that describes a plot device that miraculously appears just when the heroes need it most. Pulp authors raised the use of this device to an art form. (Many game masters use such devices regularly in campaigns to save the PCs' collective bacon.)

"Just as you leap off the cliff to avoid the rabid, mutant dog-men pursuing you and fall into the shark-infested waters below, a Coast Guard cutter steams around the point and hurls lines and life-preservers to your soaking heroes."

When using such a device, be certain it does not solve all the heroes' problems—it merely leads them directly to the next catastrophe.

"As the cutter pulls away from the island fortress and your PCs draw a deep breath, your characters hear a muffled explosion from below decks. As the cutter rocks from the blast, a Guardsman points to starboard and yells, "U-boat! We've been torpedoed! Here comes another one!"

History: The eras of the pulps and the comics' Golden Age are parts of our own history, unlike super heroes, interstellar travel, or magic spells. Make use of your local library for books on the history of these eras. Watch PBS or the Discovery Channel for documentaries, especially on WWII, or look for WWII-era movies.

Combining super heroes with real-history events is an intriguing possibility. How would the addition of superhuman soldiers have affected the outcome of WWII? Airborne heroes or those with distance attacks could help fight the Battle of Britain, or, maybe they just happen to be in Hawaii on December 7, 1941.

Flying or amphibious heroes could guard the American seacoasts, escort supply or troop convoys, or hunt the Nazi U-boat "wolf packs" or the fearsome battleship, *Bismarck.* Land-based heroes might find themselves assigned to special commando units to perform top-secret missions behind enemy lines. Some heroes could work with the U.S. Marines when they land on Japanese-held Pacific islands. Some could fight Rommel and his Panzers in the North African desert, or a few may assist British forces in the jungles of Burma.

Imagine the heroic forces that could be gathered to aid the Allies for the D-Day landings—an entire campaign could be built around preparing for and taking part in the invasion of Fortress Europe.

As if supervillains, saboteurs, bullets, and bombs weren't enough, the DC Comics' heroes who operated during WWII had another problem to deal with. Both the German and Japanese homelands were protected by vastly powerful magical artifacts. These artifacts would automatically convert any heroes who had true super powers to the side of the Axis forces.

The effect these "barriers" had was to prevent all the Allied heroes from simply flying to Berlin or Tokyo and ending the war virtually overnight. I recommend some similar type of barrier if you intend to host a WWII campaign. In the Golden Age campaign I'm currently running, I've modified the barrier to take effect only on enemy-held territory. This will allow my campaign's heroes to aid Allied forces in slugging it out against the Axis on the many battlefields of the war.

Sources

I've broken down the numerous sources you can use to put together your own pulp or Golden Age campaign into three areas:

Gaming: The primary source for any GM who wants to run a Golden Age super hero campaign is *The World at War Sourcebook* for the DC HEROES game by Ray Winninger. Regardless of the game system you use, this book is mandatory for any Golden Age campaign. Other games are also very useful: the *Justice Inc.* game by Hero Games is specifically devoted to the pulp era (and its outstanding supplement on creating and playing a lost-civilization campaign, "Lands of Mystery," by Aaron Allston, deserves a second mention); the *GURPS Cliffhangers Sourcebook* is not a stand-alone game, but is an excellent overview of the pulp and war eras; the *Agent 13 Sourcebook,* for the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game, is another treat from Ray Winninger. Although I never cared for the Agent 13 character, this book is very well done; and the *Daredevils* game, by the defunct Fantasy Games Unlimited, also was a complete system for running pulp adventures.

Other games that do not deal directly with the pulp or super-hero genres still can be helpful. These include: the *Mercenaries, Spies, and Private Eyes* game, originally published by Flying Buffalo—this simple game gives terrific tips on how to run mysteries in a role-playing game. The GANGBUSTERS™ game from TSR Inc., is the definitive game of combatting the organized-crime gangs of the 1920s and 1930s. The BOOT HILL® game, also from TSR, similarly handles the American Wild West. The BUCK ROGERS™ ADVENTURE game, due out this August, will take Buck back to his pulp-era roots—the original comic strips he appeared in. And the *Call of Cthulhu* game, by Chaosium, is set in the late 1920s and makes liberal use of H. P. Lovecraft's (and others') pulp horror stories that were originally published in that era. For those DRAGON® Magazine collectors out there, issue #104 contained a Golden Age MSH adventure, "Sudden Dawn," by William Tracy.

Many of these products also are filled with extensive reference lists worth checking out at your local library. Bear in mind that at least some of these games are out of print—it may take some hunting through your game store's back shelves to find copies.

Comics: The most obvious comic sources are the books published by Marvel and DC that were set in the WWII era. *The All-Star Squadron,* published by DC, and *The Invaders,* by Marvel, detail each company's WWII heroes and universes. Back issues might still be available in your area. If not, many old DC stories are being reprinted in its "Archives" series. Also, Marvel is publishing an *Invaders* miniseries this spring and summer.

Other comic sources do exist. Look for these books: *The Encyclopedia of Super Heroes* and *The Encyclopedia of Super Villains,* by Jeff Rovin, published by Facts on File in 1985 and 1987 respectively; *Superhero Comics of the Golden Age: An Illustrated History,* by Mike

Benton, published by Taylor Publishing Co., in 1992; and *Crawford's Encyclopedia of Comic Books,* by Hubert H. Crawford, published by Jonathan David publishing, Inc., in 1978.

Fiction and other media: GMs are pointed toward two essential characters of pulp fiction: the Doc Savage stories by Kenneth Robeson (a pseudonym of Lester Dent, among others) and the Shadow stories by Walter Gibson. Beside the authors mentioned above, look for books or story collections by Jacques Futrelle, Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammett, Manly Wade Wellman, Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, Hugh B. Cave, Randall Garrett, Raymond Chandler, E. E. "Doc" Smith, Robert E. Howard, H. P. Lovecraft, and H. Rider Haggard.

A series of books was published in the 1970s by Byron Priess Visual Publications that attempted to revive the popularity of pulp stories: *Weird Heroes* consisted of eight volumes, at least some of which should be available at used-book stores.

TSR Inc., published three paperback collections of pulp stories in 1987. The AMAZING® science-fiction anthologies series reprinted works that originally appeared in AMAZING STORIES® Magazine. Look for *The Wonder Years: 1926-1935, The War Years: 1936-1945,* and *The Wild Years: 1946-1955.* Collections like these are a terrific resource since they contain many stories by different authors.

The Time-Life series of books on WWII should be available in most school or public libraries and are packed with photographs of the prewar and wartime eras. Other, non-historical sources include: the three "Indiana Jones" movies—tributes to the pulps and the movie serials of the 1940s they spawned. Many of the 1940s serials themselves are now for sale on videotape. *The Rocketeer* was a terrific pulp story inspired by the comic book. *Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins,* is a film derived from the Destroyer series of pulp novels. *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai,* is a zany film tribute to the pulps—Buckaroo is an exemplary pulp character, he can do *everything.*

Another source for good movies is Jim Lowder's *Into the Dark.* That column has recently featured reviews of movies about Fu Manchu (issue 77), super heroes (issue 72), and pulp heroes (issue 73). Horror movies, one of Jim's favorite topics, are great places from which to steal super-villain ideas, too.

I'm interested in hearing from readers who implement some of my suggestions. If you have comments, questions, or a good campaign story that resulted from something you read in this column, I'd love to hear from you. Write to *With Great Power,* c/o POLYHEDRON® Newszine, P.O. Box 515, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

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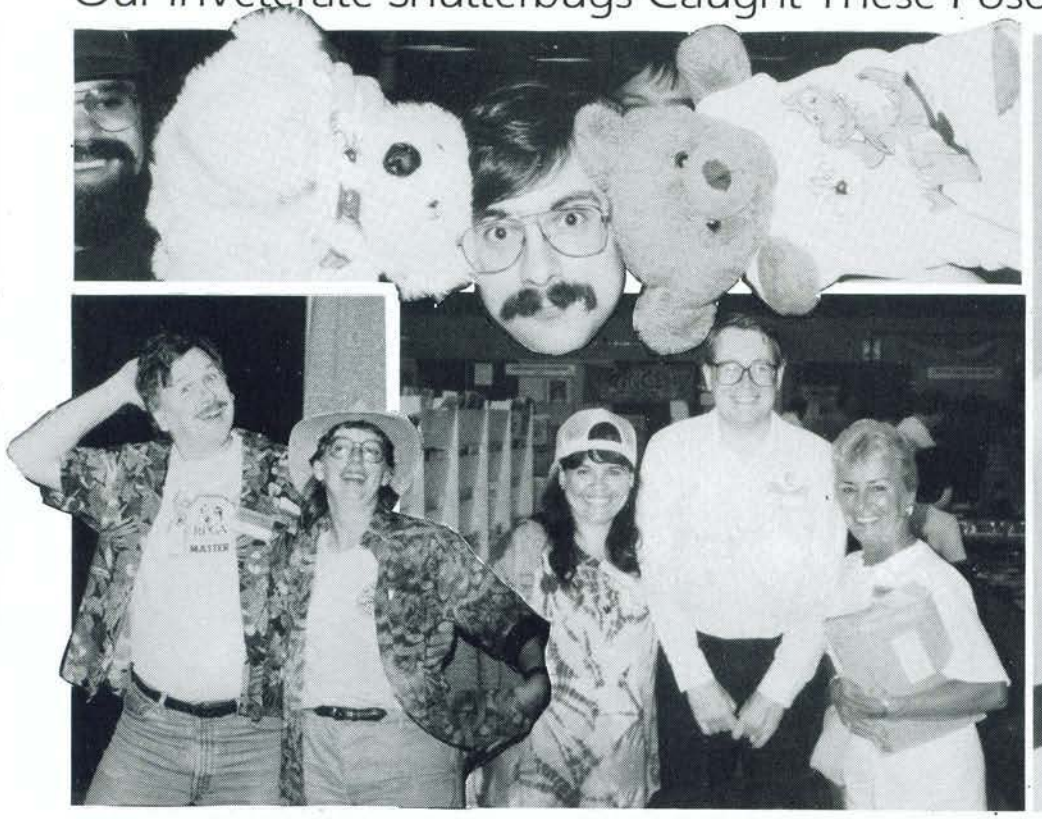
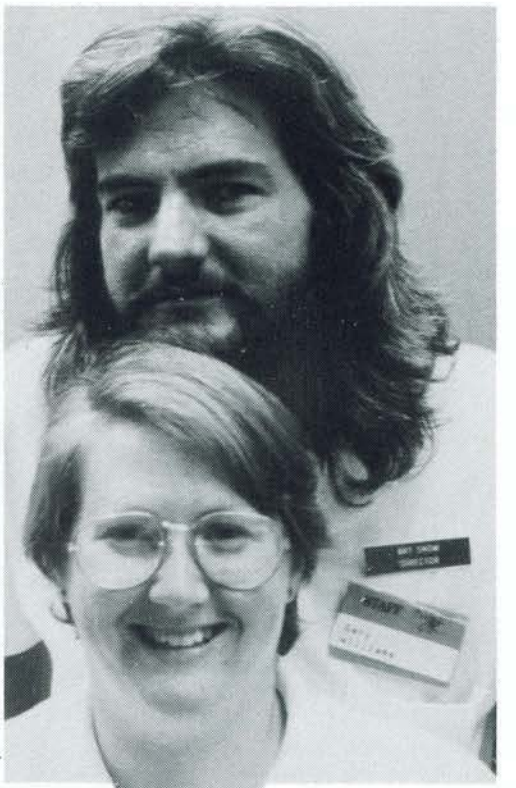
Our Inveterate Shutterbugs Caught These Poses Around The Country





Classifieds

United Kingdom, England: I am a 23-year-old AD&D® game player and a 14-year veteran. I am an English student planning to spend my senior year in Ormskirk, England. I'd like to have a gaming pen pal from that area who I can meet when I arrive. Send me a letter and tell me what games you play (I'm flexible). John Montagne, 921 22nd St., Sioux City, IA 51104, USA.

Canada, Alberta: I am a 16-year-old male adventurer looking for DMs and players in the Edmonton area. I play the D&D® and AD&D games. I'm interested in forming a Network club this summer. Please contact: William Burgess, % Brentwood College, Box 1000, Mill Bay, British Columbia V0R 2P0, Canada.

Canada, Ontario: Hi! I'm an AD&D game enthusiast (both versions) looking for gamers in the Oshawa/Whitby/Pickering area. Call Jason at (416)668-9978 or write to: Jason Gifford, 178 Pringle Dr., Whitby, Ontario L1N 6K5, Canada. I promise to answer all replies.

California: I am a 15-year-old player/DM looking for a group to game with. I play the AD&D game, but am eager to learn others. I am new to the Network and am anxious to play. Please contact: David Sand, 16605 Delia Ave., Torrance, CA 90504; (310)538-2582.

California: I am new to the Banning area and I'd like to join a game club or group. I have played the AD&D game in the DARK SUN™ and SPELLJAMMER® settings, Elfquest, Star Wars, and the STAR FRONTIERS® game. I've also played a little Shadowrun and Robotech. I'm willing to learn new games. I'm 20 years old and have played adventure games for five years. Please contact: Keith Taylor, 3863 West Ramsey St., Banning, CA 92220; (714)849-8993.

California: I'd like to start a club, or just a gaming group, here in the San Diego area. I'm seeking players for the AD&D game, Battletech, GURPS, and Warhammer. Only serious players need respond. I prefer gamers age 20+. I am willing to try new systems. I have more than 13 years' experience. Call Jason McKay, (619)470-6070 Monday-Sunday after 5 pm.

California: The Golden Dragons Gaming Club (GDGC) is looking for serious gamers in two areas. GDGC Chapter 28 seeks campaigners in the Hemet/San Jacinto area. GDGC Chapter 28-4 is looking in the Huntington Beach/Fountain Valley area. Come challenge the mysteries of TSR game worlds. Gamers of any race, gender, or religion welcome. Only serious gamers need apply. Write: GDGC, 560 Taft Ave., Hemet, CA 92543.

Illinois: I am a DM looking for players who would like to adventure in the Kara-Tur, DRAGONLANCE™, FORGOTTEN REALMS®, SPELLJAMMER, and DARK SUN, settings. I also have been a player in the GREYHAWK®, RAVENLOFT®, and Lanhkmar settings. Interested gamers from the Ford-Iroquois area please contact: Jared W. Rascher, P.O. Box 433, 405 W. Central, Buckley, IL 60918; (217)394-2693 (after 5 pm).

Illinois: Hail! I'm a 16-year-old AD&D 2nd edition game player who wishes to join a gaming group in the Rockford area. Anybody out there who's interested in adding a new member to the party please write: Ira Bragg III, 1140 2nd Ave., Rockford, IL 61104.

Minnesota: I am a 10-year RPG veteran seeking players and Judges of any RPGs who are interested in starting a club. I am experienced in both version of the AD&D game, D&D game, MARVEL SUPER HEROES game, Heroes Unlimited, Rifts, Robotech, Megatraveller, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. I am willing to help teach people how to play these games and am willing to learn other games. Contact: Aaron Mickel Aanerud, 460 Jefferson Blvd., Big Lake, MN 55309; (612)262-7565.

Missouri: The Role Players Guild of Kansas City invites all gamers in the Kansas City area to expand the ranks of your Network club. We meet every 13th at 7 pm and the last Sunday of the month at the Howard Johnson Central Hotel, 610 Washington in Kansas City, MO. We play various games on both dates. Our members enjoy the fellowship of local gamers and receive discounts at our three yearly conventions and at game and comic shops across the metro area. We have a monthly newsletter, play test for various game companies, and run benefits for local charities. For information contact: RPG of KC, P.O. Box 7457, Kansas City, MO 64116-0157; (816)455-5020.

Missouri: Twenty-four-year old DM/Player seeks others to play both versions of the AD&D game. I also have played Star Wars, Twilight 2000, Champions, the STAR FRONTIERS game. Runequest, and Napoleonics. I have a variety of gaming resources, including 23 commercial modules which I am willing to sell. I am currently designing my own AD&D game world. Any age group is fine, but I prefer a serious yet cooperative and fun atmosphere. Matthew Thomas, 827 Washington Ave. Apt. 4F, St. Louis, MO 63101.

Nebraska: *Wanted:* Players for the DARK SUN setting, TOP SECRET® game. and Champions in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area. Contact: Jon at (402)533-2994.

New Hampshire: We are a small group with a combined gaming experience of more than 35 years. We are seeking other members in southern New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts for fresh ideas, new friendships, and possibly a gaming club. Interested? Call Mike at (603)647-4817; please leave a message.

North Carolina: I am a 22-year-old AD&D 2nd edition game player. I'd like to join a campaign that uses any of the HR series historical reference books. I also play the D&D game; if you have any old D&D modules to sell give me a call: William Hertenstein, 1408 Brunson Ct. Cary, NC 27511; (919)469-3299.

Vermont: Small group looking for DM/player. We play mostly the AD&D game, but are willing to learn other games. Please contact: Bob Lauro, 100 Wales St., Rutland, VT 05701; (802)775-0635.

Virginia/Maryland: *Wanted:* Game masters for Castle Con 6; to be held July 2-4 at the Double Tree Inn in Crystal City, VA (across the street from the Pentagon). For information please write: Fantek—Castle Con 6 Games, 1607 Thomas Rd., Ft. Washington, MD 20744 .

Washington: Vancouver area group looking for other members to start a Network club that will play both versions of the AD&D game, the GAMMA WORLD® 4th edition game. both editions of Star Wars, and Shadowrun 2nd edition. We are open to new gamers. Write: Nick Kessler, 1020 W. 45th St., Vancouver, WA 98660.

General: *For Sale:* Painted miniatures for the AD&D game, Dark Queen of Krynn game (IBM version, $25), DUNGEON® Adventures #3 (used, $20) and #7-16, Serpent Mage Book 4, All the Weyrs of Pern (HC, $10 each), and much more. Also looking for input on campaigns in the AL-QADIM™ and GREYHAWK® From the Ashes settings. Write: Chris Perry, 23309 Richfield Rd., Corning, CA 96021-9770 (send a SASE with your first letter).

General: I would like to buy The Soulforge from AD&D gamebook #4 in reasonable condition. Send price. Also looking for pen pals age 18 and up. I'll respond to all letters. Send to: Michelle R. Bauman, 5096 Washington Rd., Delray Beach, FL 33484.

General: Fellow role player wishes correspondence from all over the world. Every letter answered. No limits on age, gender, nationality, or topic; but please write only in English or Spanish. Adrián Gómez Reyes, Vicente Eguía 50, Cel. Tacubaya, México, D.F. 11850.

General: *Desperately Wanted:* Original Grenadier Models Star Wars miniatures boxed sets. Must be in good condition, preferably unpainted. I'm particularly interested in Stormtroopers, Bounty Hunters, Imperial Forces, and the movie sets. I'll consider any reasonable offer. Please contact: Dave Gdula, 1802 Dalhousie Court, Apt. A2, Baltimore, MD 21234.

General: New! WAR-I-GAMI REMS for RPGs REMS? Rapid Employment Mapping System. Layouts are based on one-inch squares. Also BULKHEADS for SF and STONEWORKS for fantasy. Plus TIMETRACKER deluxe with revised generic rules for use with REMS. Write for catalog: AVU. P.O. Box 27265, West Allis, WI 53227-0265. 5% discount to Network members.

General: *For Sale:* Rules and several supplements for Star Wars, The Role Playing Game. Also a brand new copy of the Marvel Mutant Update. For price list, send a SASE to: Clint Himmelberger, RD1 Box 1226, Hamburg, PA 19526. I also would like to buy D&D game Gazetteers 1, 3, 8, and 13. Send price list to the address above.

General: AD&D game Oriental Adventures book and AD&D 2nd Edition game Dungeon Masters Guide for sale. Contact: Ron Clair, 14365 Alexander, Livonia, MI 48154; (313)261-0515.

Conventions

CubeCon '93, July 23-24
Butler, PA
Come one, come all to the Butler County Community College, Cranberry Campus. The BCCC gaming guild is proud to sponsor CubeCon '93. Events will include Network tournaments such as the AD&D® 2nd edition game, Shadowrun, and the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game. Other events will include Warhammer 40K, Star Trek, micro armor, and more. There will be a dealer area and prizes. For information write: CubeCon '93, P.O. 1203, Butler, PA 16003-1203; or call Jason Lent (412)898-2959.

CONTEST IX, August 6-8
Tulsa, OK
Tulsa's original gaming con returns with more events that you can shake a stick at. Gaming events range from Axis & Allies to Warhammer, the AD&D game to Werewolf. Network events include: AD&D game Feature, Masters, and Benefit, Paranoia, Shadowrun, Dark Conspiracy, and Timemaster. Other notable activities include a dealers' room, computer game room, open gaming space, new product demos, an auction, historically accurate miniatures games, miniatures painting contest, and live role playing events. Pre-registration is $10 for members of the Network, HMGS and many local clubs, $12 otherwise. For information contact: Roger Allen, % CONTEST IX, P.O. Box 4357, Tula, OK 74159-0357.

Gold Con II, August 14
Clark, NJ
This convention, sponsored by AU gamers, will be held at American Legion Post 328, located at 78 Westfield Ave. in Clark. Activities will include role playing games and Network tournaments, miniatures, board games, and a miniatures painting contest. Pre-registration before July 31 is $8; there are no event fees. Write: AU Gamers, P.O. Box 81, Whippany, NJ 07981, or call (201)402-9239.

GEN CON® 26 Game Fair, August 19-22
Milwaukee, WI
If you've never attended a Game Fair, you cannot imagine the scope of this four-day gaming blowout. The schedule includes more than 1,000 games, dozens of seminars, book signings, a cavernous exhibit hall, a huge games auction, manufacturers' demonstrations, product giveaways, a massive art show, costume competition, and lots more. The Network will offer its annual Wednesday night members meeting, trivia bowl, and charity auction (which usually features a very large, very bright, framed photo of a well-known Network member doing something unforgettable), Friday morning breakfast and awards ceremony, and loads of seminars and tournaments. The Network welcomes all judges and volunteers. For convention information write: The GEN CON Game Fair, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147; (414)248-3625. To volunteer to judge Network events write: Network Judge Appeal, P.O. Box 515, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

DRF-Con, August 27-29
Vanløse, Denmark
This convention will be held at the Katrineadas-skolen in Vanløse. Events will include role playing, board, and miniatures games. The AD&D tournament winner will receive an entry to the European AD&D game championship tournament and a trip to European GEN CON Game Fair. Games will be held in English if requested at time of registration. Game masters, convention volunteers, and DRF members receive registration discounts. For information write: André Just Simonsen, Rytterkær 21, Herringløse DK-3670 Veskø Sjælland, Denmark, or call international +45-42-16-91-01.

Gateway '93, September 3-6
Los Angeles, CA
All types of family, strategy, board, role playing, and miniatures games will be offered, including Network tournaments. Hunt for bargains at the flea market, auction, and exhibit area. There will be seminars, demonstrations, and special guests. Contact: Strategicon, P.O. Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849 or call (310)326-9440 for more details.

Souix City Gamecon VIII, September 3-6
South Souix City, NE
The Marina Inn will be the site for this weekend of miniatures, board games, and role playing. Features include Network events, an auction, and a dealers' room. For information, send a SASE to: Kurt Lyons, 2801 Jennings, Sioux City, IA 51104.

Council of Five Nations 19, October 1-3
Schenectady, NY
Enjoy one of the longest-running gaming traditions in the country. Our site is the Ramada Inn on Nott Street in Schenectady. Rooms booked before September 3rd are $55 a night, plus tax, for four people. The convention will offer many Network events, club challenges, open role playing, Star Fleet, L.A.R.P., miniatures, and board games. There also will be seminars, demonstrations, an auction, a dealers' area, miniatures painting and costume competitions, and a benefit breakfast to support the Farano Center for Children. A portion of all registration fees goes to our benefit fund. GMs, you are needed! For information write: Schenectady Wargamers Association—C.O.F.N. 19, P.O. Box 9429, Schenectady, NY 12309, or call Sandilyn Sherman at (518)664-9451; feel free to leave a message.

COSCON '93, October 8-10
Beaver Falls, PA
The Circle of Swords Gaming Guild is sponsoring a convention at the Beaver Falls Holiday Inn, just off the Pennsylvania Turnpike, exit 2. The schedule features first-run Network tournaments including Grand Masters, Masters, Decathlon, and Benefit tournaments, board games, miniatures events (including a major multi-day event) and other role playing events. We also will have a large dealers' area, a miniatures painting contest, and new game demonstrations. For details, send a SASE to: Circle of Swords, P.O. Box 2126, Butler, PA 16003, or call Dave Schnur at (412)283-1159.

Totally Tubular Con, October 15-17
Anaheim, CA
The Awesome Gamers Yacht Club is proud to invite all role players to our convention, which will feature several first-run Network events including Living City, Masters, and a Decathlon tournament. The convention will be held at the Jolly Roger Inn, Anaheim, across the street from Disneyland. Pre-registration is limited. For information write: Totally Tubular Con, P.O. Box 18791, Anaheim Hills, CA 92817-8791.

Fields of Honor II, October 16-17
Des Moins, IA
Join the Adventurers of Central Iowa and Hearts of Lead for role playing: Network events, AD&D games, Star Wars, Champions, and more. Miniatures: a wide variety of rules, scales, and time periods. Board games: from Monopoly to Talisman. Plus auctions, sword tag, live action, contests, and prizes. We need players and judges. For information write: Comics Plus, % Fields of Honor, 7015 Douglas Ave., Urbandale, IA 50322; (515)253-0907.

This Just In

Tournament results for the following conventions were recorded at HQ between April 15th and May 10th, 1993:

Bama Con
Conline 8
Cracker Con
Jaxcon 9
Magnum Opus Con 8

If you played a Network event at a convention not on this list, check with the convention organizer to see if the results have been sent to HQ.

Note that conventions run in **Europe** and **Australia** do not appear on this list.

ConnCon Scenario Design Contest

This contest will be held in conjunction with ConnCon '94. You may enter a scenario for any game system sanctioned by the RPGA® Network. Use the latest edition of the rules. No "house rules" are allowed, but new monsters, items, are okay. One, two, or three round events are acceptable.

Our judges will review all submissions. The winning scenario, and all honorable mentions, will be submitted to the Network for editing and sanctioning. ConnCon '94 will use as many of these events as possible for its official Network tournaments. There will be at least two divisions: one for authors who already have written sanctioned tournaments, and one for authors who have never written a sanctioned event. Prizes will be supplied by the Network and by ConnCon.

You do not have to be a Network member to enter. For contest rules and more information contact: **ConnCon, P.O. Box 444, Sherman, CT 86784-0444.**

General: I seek the following: H2 Mines of Bloodstone, H3 Bloodstone Wars, N4 Treasure Hunt, N5 Under Illefarn, REF4 Book of Lairs II, Unearthed Arcana, Monster Manual II, and the map from FR5 The Savage Frontier. Contact: Brion Babula, 4308 Shadow Wood Ln., Winter Haven, FL 33880; (813)293-1117.

General: *For Sale:* X-Men, Spider Man, Marvel Universe II, Marvel Masterpiece, Shadow Hawk, Youngblood, Star Trek: The Next Generation, and more. For a list, send a SASE to: Tim Lauchnor, 2110 Mack Rd., East Greenville, PA 18041.

General: Looking to buy DUNGEON® Adventures 1-9. Waterdeep Trail Map, and FR1 Waterdeep and the North all in fine to excellent condition. Send price list to: Conrad R. Geist, 125 Walnut St., Ft. Morgan, CO 80701-2637.

General: I am looking for copies of The Possibility Chalice and The Forever City for the Torg game. Make me an offer! Contact: Allen Purler Jr., P.O. Box 162, Old Monroe, MO 63369; (314)665-5740 (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday afternoons).

General: Large collection of DRAGON® Magazines for sale by private collector. Issues as far back as #18. Most are very good condition to near mint. For a price list, send a SASE to: Michael Cox, 123 Louis St. Apt. B., New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

General: The CRYPT Invaders adventuring company is looking for players from anywhere in the continental U.S. to participate in a play-by-mail adventure. The system is of our own invention and we charge no fees—we simply seek dependable players. We currently are running a WORLD OF GREYHAWK® adventure for the AD&D® game. We also play in the RAVENLOFT®, SPELLJAMMER®, DARK SUN™, and FORGOTTEN REALMS® settings We are familiar with Rifts, Battletech, MERP, Shadowrun, and Stormbringer. All are welcome, from careful thinkers to hack 'n slashers. Fore rules and a current adventure update send a SASE to: Ross Carr, P.O. Box 56, Cassville, MO 65625.

General: *For Sale:* Products for the AL-QADIM™, DARK SUN, and RAVENLOFT campaigns. For a price list, send a SASE to: Laura Lovelace, P.O. Box 521228, Big Lake, AK 99652.

General: *For Sale:* Original collector's edition white box D&D® game rules set. Box is slightly worn, rule books are in mint condition. Also for sale: Chainmail game; Eldritch Wizardry; Swords & Spells; Blackmoor; and Gods, Demi-Gods, and Heroes all in mint or near-mint condition. Send your offer to: Mae Tanner, 5905 Churchill Way Lot #51, Juneau, AK 99801; (907)780-4627.

General: The Grand Campaign meets the first Wednesday of every month and specializes in convention game support, seminars, corporate liaisons, and workshops for GMs, writers, and artists. For information write: The Grand Campaign, Box 770396, Oklahoma City, OK 73177. The Grand Campaign is sponsored in part by The Players' Guild of Central Oklahoma.

General: *Attention Clubs:* We are compiling a national gaming club directory. Listings are free and open to all clubs. Write for a survey form: Unconventional Graphics, % Rick Silva, 841 Worcester Rd. Suite 207, Natic, MA 01760.

General: Hello! I am 19 years old and looking for people who like new creations for their campaigns. I can create all sorts of things. I'm also looking for pen pals who like to share in fantastic things. Finally I am looking for people who like to play through the mail. All letters will be answered. Jerry Lee Horne, Rt. 2 Box 620, Lakeland. GA 31635; (912)487-5472.

General: *Wanted:* D&D game Masters boxed set; original D&D game supplement IV Gods, Demi-Gods, and Heroes; and AC04 Book of Marvelous Magic. Send price list to: Refugio L. Gonzales, 312 E. 11th St. Box 153, Olton, TX 79064.

Trading Cards/General: *Wanted:* 1991 85, 250, 341, 342, and 461. I'm also looking for pen pals to discuss the AD&D game, computers, and related subjects. Send lists and letters to: Jeff Keithley, 1606 Clearbrook Rd., Lansdale, PA 19446.

Trading Cards: *Wanted:* 1992 Series II 639. I have many '91, '92, and '93 cards to trade; also many super hero cards. Patricia Smith, 1739 Glendale Ave., Windsor, Ontario N8T 2N1, Canada.

Trading Cards: *Wanted:* 1991 gold borders 14, 15, 81, 82, 88-96, 102-104, 106, 158-160, 209, 266, 267, 310-312, 331-336, 349, 351-353, 361-368, 374, 376, 377, 427, 428, 470, 583, 591, 607, 641-644, 663, 671, 680, 686, 687, 691-699, 703, 709, 710, and 716-750. I have more than 700 '92s for sale or trade and more than 400 '93 series I including red borders and rare cards. I am looking for select red borders and several rare cards. I even have a few '91s for sale or trade and I need a few '91s. Send your want and have lists to: Robin Reinke, 20 Song Sparrow Ln., Hilton Head Island, SC 29928.

Trading Cards: *To Trade:* 1992 352, 365-377, 607, 622, 633, 644, 639, and 671. I need 361-363, 631, 637, 663, and 670. I have other cards to trade. Send your trade list to: Jeff Stoumbaugh, 2316 43rd St. SE, Puyallup, WA 98374.

Network News: Magnum Opus Con 8 was held in Greenville, SC April 1-4. The convention hosted 11 Network events and raised more than $500 to benefit the Harty Koeller Memorial Scholarship Fund. Also showing his customary generosity, the ubiquitous PM GM (Jay Tummelson) donated more than $600 to the Fund by participating in the MOC slave auction. The slave-driving top GM forced his two acquisitions to perform such arduous tasks as die rolling, soft drink fetching, and party locating. Meanwhile, in the game room, Sherrie Miller joined the 180 club with a perfect judge score for Masquerade, while Nicky Rea added yet another 180 to her ever-growing list for her work on The Paper Chase. The coordinators also got tired of looking at Pete Stassum's face as the first-time MOCer kept racking up wins. (Okay, maybe not tired, but he sure was a familiar sight in the prize room). Thanks to all the Network members who helped make MOC a success.

Attention Living City Players

The following notices has been posted throughout Ravens Bluff:

Public Safety Alert:
It has come to our attention that various unscrupulous wizards specializing in so-called "Wild Magic" are even now lurking within this fair city. Citizens are warned that "Wild Magic" is dangerously unpredictable. Anyone knowing the whereabouts or identity of such wizards is urged to report the matter to the nearest constable without delay.

Alien Registration Required:
All citizens and long-term visitors from foreign lands are hereby requested and required to present themselves at their home government's embassy by the end of this tenday, or to City Hall if not represented by an ambassador, by the end of this tenday to A: register as a foreign citizen residing in Ravens Bluff or B: Announce intention to formally emigrate and become a Ravens Bluff citizen.

Charles Oliver O'Kane, Lord Mayor
Tordon Sureblade, Lord Chancellor

Translation: Wild magic is off limits to Living City characters. If you have a wild mage, you must convert the character to a mage or specialist wizard (no elementalists either). Note that wild magic is available only to wild mages. If your character has a wild magic spell in a spell book, you must replace it with a non-wild magic spell.

If you have a character from Maztica or Kara-Tur who uses the special rules from the Maztica boxed set or the Oriental Adventures book, you must register the character by sending HQ a copy of the character by August 11th, 1993. Only characters that you have used in a Living City tournament can be registered. This reflects the fact that while some characters from these lands might visit the Living City, very few will live there permanently. A listing of official resident or naturalized aliens will appear in the Newszine. Unregistered characters are assumed to have been arrested as spies or left the city. Characters from areas of Faerun outside the Vast need not register.

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